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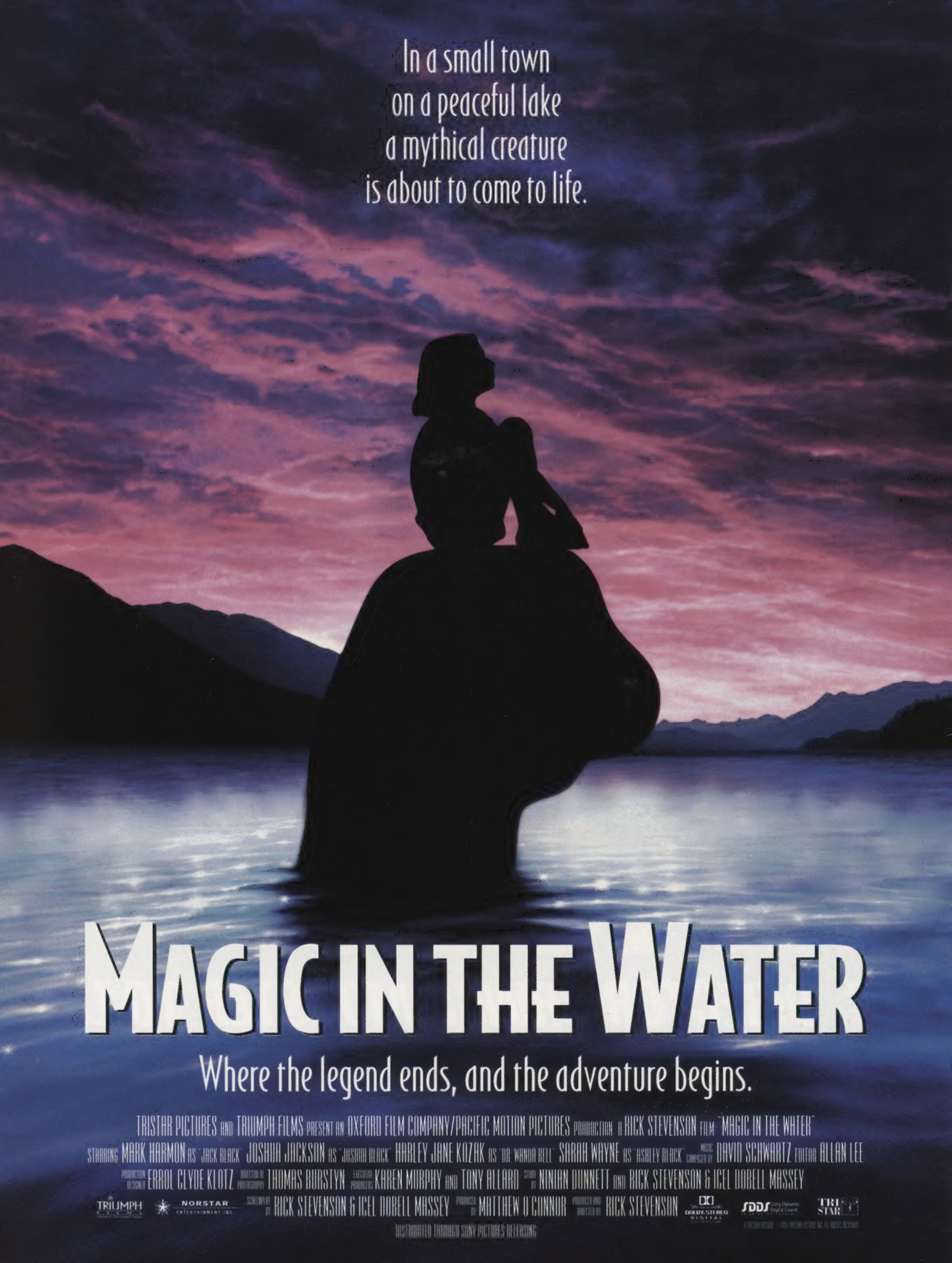
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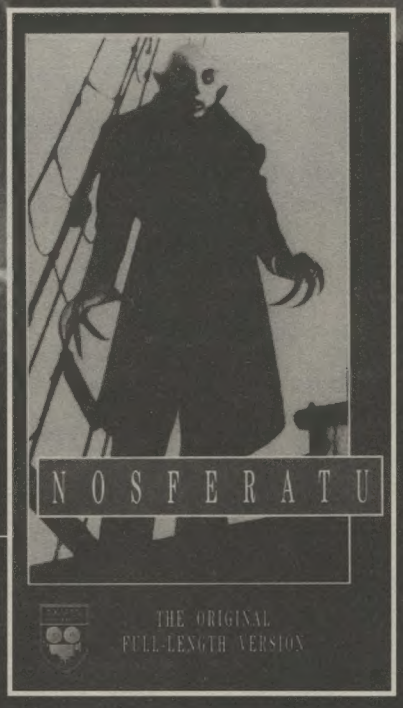

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Photo by Gino Donato

First issues are traditionally a time when you thank all the people who helped make the dream come true.

To do that in this case would take up a good-sized chunk of the magazine and there is always the fear that someone would be left out.

Of course our wives, husbands, parents and friends all played a large role in assisting us, both in body and in spirit, in getting Parsec launched.

Suffice it to say that there were others who offered support — both in words, deeds and criticism — has been appreciated. Without their kindness, Parsec would not have become a reality.

Thanks for allowing this bit of indulgence, now enjoy the magazine.

Chris Krejlgaard

Sherri Sten

John Lappa

PARSEC

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1995

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The noble experiment

So what is Parsec?

Well, besides being roughly 3.26 light years, it is an experiment of sorts.

An experiment that began last summer. As I searched for a publication to sell a story to. It suddenly occurred to me that there had to be other writers who were in the same quandary. There are few magazines that authors of science and science fiction stories or articles can turn to when it comes time to make a sale. And unfortunately, all of them — at least the mainstream publications — are all south of the border, which makes it even more difficult to make a sale.

Why aren't there any Canadian-produced science fiction or fantasy magazines?

Of course, there are some. But they are, for the most, regionally based so the majority of the country doesn't know they exist.

Parsec, at least as far as we know, is the first national mainstream science fiction produced in Canada specifically for Canadian readers.

And we hope that it will provide a forum for Canadian writers and artists, and a forum for debate on scientific and science fiction-related matters.

Besides bringing readers lively, entertaining and informative stories from the realm of science fiction, fantasy and horror —the line between the different genres has become blurred over the years so now there is such an overlap it is nearly impossible to exclude all elements of one of the genres without diminishing the other two.

We are striving to make Parsec something more than just a press-release or a fanzine type of publication (there are already enough of those on newsstands). The three of us have almost thirty years of journalism experience between us, and we plan to bring that experience to the fore as we try to inform readers, to entertain them and, perhaps, to open new vistas.

Like I said before — an experiment.

So now, you hold the product of what was conceived a year ago.

We hope that you enjoy it and take the time to let us know what you think of Parsec (and what you think we can improve on).

If your a Canadian writer or artist and you think that you have something to offer our readers, then please send us an self-addressed stamped envelop and we'll be more than happy to send you our writers/artist guidelines.

Our mandate, after all, is to provide a stage for quality Canadian-produced works.

❑❑❑

First issues are not traditionally a time to make an apology, but we must.

In some of the promotional material that was used for this issue, we had stated that we would be including an X-Files-related article. Unfortunately, shortly after the time that the material was submitted we were informed by Fox officials in Toronto that such an interview was not possible within our deadlines. We're sorry for this little glitch in our editorial line-up, but we hope to have such an interview included in one of our upcoming issues.

Parsec, volume 1 number 1, August 1995, UPC — 56698-71606-08.

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PARSEC LETTERS

Dear reader,

Since this is the first issue of Parsec, there are no letters to the editor to offer you.

Such letters are an important part of any publication. They tell the publication where there is room for improvement and where it hit the mark. Letters tell if a certain article has touched a chord — either on a good or bad note.

And, most importantly, letters stir up debate and thought among other readers — sometimes more than the actual story itself.

I hope that you take advantage of this opportunity to express your thoughts on what you have seen in Parsec. Your comments are crucial as we refine the publication in the months ahead.

Below are some guidelines we'd like letter writers to follow. In order to be included in our next issue, letters must be received before Sept. 1.

Thanks

CHRIS KREJLGAARD
Publisher

WE WANT YOUR LETTERS

We are interested in knowing what you think about what you've seen (or haven't seen) in Parsec

Letters should be no more than 175 words and should include your name, address and telephone number (which won't be published)

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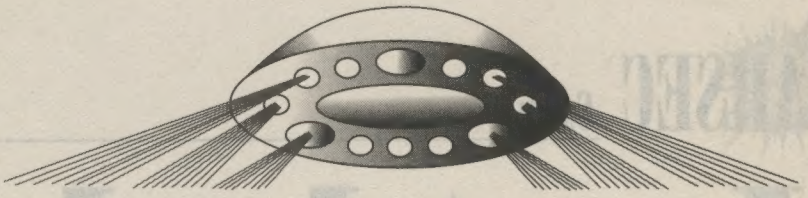

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Just below the surface

Making Orky come to life just took a little money and a lot of imagination

By
KENNEDY GORDON

There aren't really any monsters in Kaslo, British Columbia. The tiny town has a lake, of course, but there aren't any creatures lurking in its depth. Well, at least they haven't been spotted yet.

Rick Stevenson didn't worry about that minor fact, though. After all, who needs an underwater monster when you're bringing your own?

Kaslo, lack of underwater beasties and all, was still the perfect location for Stevenson's directorial debut, the upcoming film Magic in the Water. Shot on location (with a week's worth of work done on a Vancouver soundstage), the film takes advantage of the town's rugged surroundings and clear, shimmering lake. And monster-free Kaslo became Glenorky, home of an

The relationship between a father and his children is at the heart of Magic in the Water, produced, directed and co-written by Rick Stevenson, above, who has an enviable track record as an independent filmmaker. On the preceding page, Willie Nark-Orn and Sara Wayne discover Orky near the imaginary town of Glenorky.

underwater creature called Orky.

Independent filmmaking being what it is, Stevenson had to scout locations for the film himself. So the intrepid director loaded up his Porsche and headed into the mountains of British Columbia and several northern American states looking for a town that could double as an average small tourist town in the Pacific Northwest.

"I'd been down in Idaho scouting, and I drove up into B.C.," explains Stevenson. "Just after I crossed the border I got hit with a serious whiteout. Couldn't see a thing. It went on forever, just me driving along blind. Then I came over a hill, the sun came out, and there was Kaslo, a little hamlet beside a sparkling lake. It was perfect."

Small towns often come fully equipped with squinty-eyed locals suspicious of city folk with grandiose ideas about making movies, bringing in even more strangers and making a mess with equipment, trailers, and odd doings. Not so in Kaslo, though.

"I went into this restaurant — actually, it's the only restaurant in the town — to get something to eat and to talk to people about the town. They started to gather around, partly because I'm a stranger and partly because I drive kind of a nice car," Stevenson explains. "They all wanted to know what I was doing there and where I was from. They were great people, and I started to think maybe I'd found my town."

So he had his town, and he had his water. All Stevenson needed was magic, and he didn't have long to wait.

"I had asked some of the locals if they ever got the northern lights in Kaslo," he says. "And they said no, almost never. None of them could remember it, at least.

"But when I left the restaurant the sky was lit up with the most beautiful northern lights I'd ever seen. People were running from all over, going 'Rick, Rick, there's your lights!' It was amazing. The Aurora Borealis was shooting an electronic message into the sky."

Now the film's done. Stevenson's thrilled with the result, but he suspects the people of Kaslo might be even more excited about the whole thing.

"They fell over backward to accommodate us when we were filming," he says. "It's a small town, and it's not close to anywhere, really, so the cast and crew brought their families up with them. It was almost like a working vacation. And the people in that town were great, fantastic. They had a parade and asked us to ride in it. There are 805 people in that town and 1,100 showed up.

"I still can't figure that out."

Although he's now several films into a successful independent filmmaking career, this is Stevenson's first foray as a director.

The 39-year-old American-born resident of Vancouver

started out intending to become a diplomat, even earning a doctorate in international relations at Oxford in England. But the film bug bit him early, and after producing an educational film for a congressional youth program — Stevenson was working for a United States senator at the time — he knew he had found the trail he'd follow.

He returned to England in 1982 to form the Oxford Film Foundation. In 1985, the foundation sponsored a screenwriting contest won by Scotland native Ninian Dunnett; Stevenson produced the resulting film, Restless Natives.

Dunnett also co-wrote the story for Magic in the Water with Icel Dobell Massey and Stevenson. Massey and Stevenson wrote the screenplay.

Stevenson's first film was 1982's Privileged.

It featured another newcomer to the film business: Hugh Grant, who has gone on to become one of the hottest properties in Hollywood. Stevenson's also produced films starring Meg Ryan and Kiefer Sutherland — Promised Land — and Patrick Dempsey and Jennifer Connelly, Some Girls. Both of those were executive produced by Robert Redford, an early fan of Stevenson's films.

Another Stevenson feature that got a lot of good word was Crooked Hearts, which starred oddball actors Peter Coyote, Jennifer Jason Leigh, and Juliette Lewis.

Magic in the Water features the American actors Mark Harmon and Harley Jane Kozak. Harmon, best known for his work on the television series St. Elsewhere and Reasonable Doubts, plays divorced radio shrink Jack Black, whose planned getaway with his kids goes flat when he barricades himself in their cabin to write a book. Kozak plays Glenorky psychiatrist Wanda Bell, who manages to get Black out of the cabin.

"They both worked for way under their usual wage," Stevenson says.

"Which was great. They did it out of sheer love for the material."

But the actor getting the most positive buzz out of this project is Vancouver teen Joshua Jackson (the Mighty Ducks films), who Stevenson hand-picked for the role. He had Jackson in mind after having previous dealings with him (the aforementioned feature Crooked Hearts), but came to a sudden realization when casting actually began: the kid was too old.

"In the film the son is supposed to be 14 or so, and at that age boys still can't fathom that dad's too busy to make a lot of time for them. They still have that sense of wonder, where dad is this almost mythical character. And Josh was about a year too old. We decided to go with him anyway, though, and it paid off. He's a terrific actor and he really made it work."

Jackson had to be good.

Key to the film's storyline is the relationship between his character and his father, played by Harmon, which is forced to evolve during the Glenorky vacation.

Of course, there's a monster in the film, too.

"But I've never been a big fan of special effects in movies," says Stevenson.

The monster is something the movie's kids — Jackson and newcomers Sarah Wayne and Willie Nark-Orn — discover and pursue as a way of escaping their concerns about Harmon.

But Stevenson got crafty.

"The monster is there, but you never really see it until the end. There's plenty of swirling water and odd sounds, and the film is all about using your senses to see something that you never actually see.

The monster is there, but you never really see it until the end. There's plenty of swirling water and odd sounds . . .

"The problem with special effects is they can often be overused, and they take over the movie. This movie is about belief, not about the monster itself."

Stevenson may have exercised prudence in using his monster, but he didn't scrimp on the effect itself. A good portion of the film's modest $5 million (U.S) budget went to create a massive animatronic sea monster, the Glenorky Lake Monster.

The task of constructing the monster went to Gene Warren and his company, Fantasy II.

Warren, who won an Academy Award for his work on Terminator 2: Judgement Day, constructed the fifty-foot-by-ten-foot Orky as a massive steel and rubber puppet — a puppet that required 12 people to operate it. But viewers won't see to much of the monster on the screen.

"When we do reveal the monster it has a real thrill to it because we've held off on it for so long," Stevenson says.

The thrill was enough to enthrall preview audiences and prompt distributor Columbia TriStar to expand the movie's release.

Stevenson has high hopes for the film and expects it to

Harley Jane Kozak plays Dr. Wanda Bell, a local psychiatrist who tries to get Dr. Jack Black (Mark Harmon) away from his book and out with his kids.

perform reasonably well against other summer films made on budgets ten-or twenty-times larger than Magic's.

And he doesn't seem nervous about his role in the creation of the film. He'd never directed a big feature before, after all, and many a producer has tried out the director's chair only to have its legs break beneath them.

"The big difference I found was that people were finally listening to me," Stevenson laughs. "There's a lot of pressure on you, and it's a different kind of pressure than there is on producers. As a producer you have to be a long distance runner; as a director you have to be a long distance sprinter. And as a producer you reach a point where you realize you can't do any more creatively and you have to do something new."

Stevenson's endeavours may be new, but lake monsters are by no means a new concept in storytelling of any kind. For centuries, tales have been told of serpent-like creatures inhabiting deep, cold lakes; Ogopogo in Lake Okanagan (not far from Kaslo) and the Loch Ness Monster are two of the more well-known legendary beasts.

Stevenson first heard of sea monsters as a child, when he spent time in Flathead, Mont., home of a purported lake monster. Later, while working on a project near Loch Ness in Scotland, he became interested in the subject again and considered making a film about the beast there.

That story eventually evolved into Magic in the Water.

"What fascinates me more than anything about this story is that people believe in these creatures," says Stevenson, who does admit to having a sneaking suspicion that some undiscovered species may be in these incredibly deep mountain lakes, most of which are situated along the 50th parallel.

"I don't know if I really believe in it," he says, "but if there is anything down there I don't think it has any great supernatural powers or anything like that. But I love these lake monsters as metaphors for faith and belief. As long as we can't prove anything's down there, it stays sacred."

***Kennedy Gordon** is a Sudbury, Ontario-based entertainment writer.*

British Columbia city has own magic in its lake

By
LAURY LAVERGNE

A mysterious creature is said to be lurking deep in the waters of Lake Okanagan in Kelowna, British Columbia. Many who say they have seen it tell stories for years to come of a"sea-monster" with a reptilian head, the body of a whale, dark grey skin and fin-like protrusions on its back.

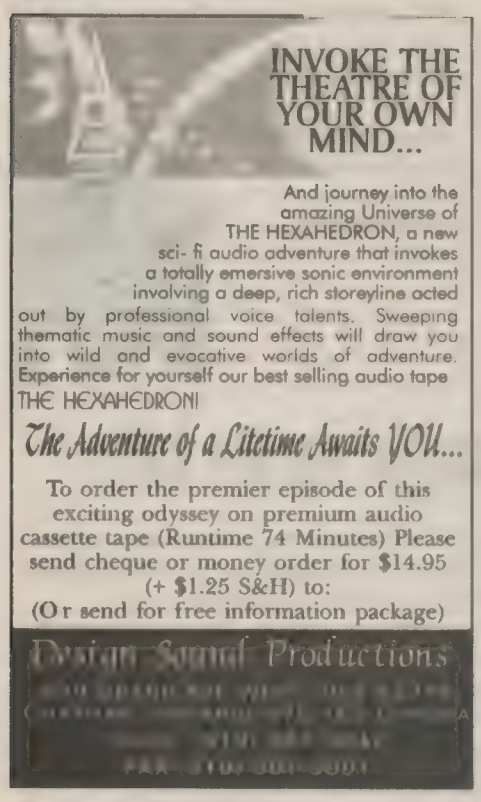
This small town and its legend have caught the attention of television crews from as far away as the United States, England and Tokyo. Documentaries have been made, pictures have been taken and each year, tourists and Kelowna citizens alike claim to have seen the elusive creature they call Ogopogo.

"I remember it well," says long-time Kelowna resident Frank Rieger, recalling his close encounter with Ogopogo 15 years ago. "It's just like it happened today."

Rieger says he saw the creature while fishing with his son and grandson on Okanagan Lake one very hot July day in 1980.

Photo by Jeff Melynchuk

Arlene Gaal, Kelowna's resident Ogopogo expert, has spent countless hours studing the legendary creator of Lake Okanagan.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It headed straight for their boat with its body and part of its tail more than three feet out of the water.

For more than 45 minutes, they watched it feeding on a fish, head dipped well below the water, thrashing wildly, Rieger says. It was so close, they could actually see its legs pumping in the water, but neither man nor animal seemed to mind.

"It's a terrifically big animal," he says, describing the body much the same as others in the past, but adding that it had legs and a very long tail. The humps people have seen, he says, are merely its massive shoulders and hind quarters.

"He was pumping his legs just like he was walking on land. As close as I could say, he could possibly be a big dinosaur.

A little different from what you see in picture books, but real close," he says.

Although legend of Ogopogo doesn't date back quite as far as the dinosaur age, "sightings" have been recorded as far back as the late 1700s, 1800s, and well into the 1900s.

Ogopogo is apparently a little on the shy side though.

Giving those who do see it but a fleeting glimpse of tail, back or just ripples on an otherwise still lake. It is also said to have great speed. In fact, in all this time, the few who have been able to capture it on film, produce pictures too blurry to provide any real proof of Ogopogos existence.

However, it was documentaries and blurry pictures that caught the attention of Kelowna journalist and writer Arlene Gaal.

Having researched and studied the sea creature for over 20 years, Gaal has been hailed as the local expert on Ogopogo.

"Being a journalist and researcher, we become curiosity seekers. I'm basically a normal, down to earth person with an unusual interest I suppose," says Gaal of her extracurricular activities.

That interest has prompted her to write two books, including Ogopogo - The Million Dollar Monster, and she is currently working on a third. She has also worked closely with film crews from Tokyo's Nippon television and is now working with visiting St. Louis scientist Alan Gillette.

Gillette has spent many hours on the lake videotaping anything that seems out of the ordinary. In fact, she believes they have had the first sighting of the year. She and Gillette are now in the process of enhancing videos containing "highly unusual activity," which is quite probably Ogopogo, she says.

"There are definitely hot spots around the lake. In view of the fact that there are no whales or submarines in the lake, it's obviously something other than a fish."

As well, Gaal is pretty sure there is not just one, but many of these sea-serpents living in the lake.

"I believe we have little ones out there with mothers, father and grandfathers."

She agrees that the idea of a real-life-sea-serpent does not appeal to everyone. Many skeptics have tried to explain away its existence by saying people have over-active imaginations or that it's simply a large fish. While others have said in the 20 to 30 years that passenger ferry's have been making their runs there has not been one reported sighting, therefore Ogopogo doesn't exist.

"There are others still who could have hard evidence right in front of them and still not believe," she adds.

However, Gaal says there are many solid citizens such as RCMP officers, journalists and city transit officials reporting sightings. And this has her curiosity peaked.

"We have literally five to seven sightings each summer and thousands of recorded sightings so far. They all seem to match.

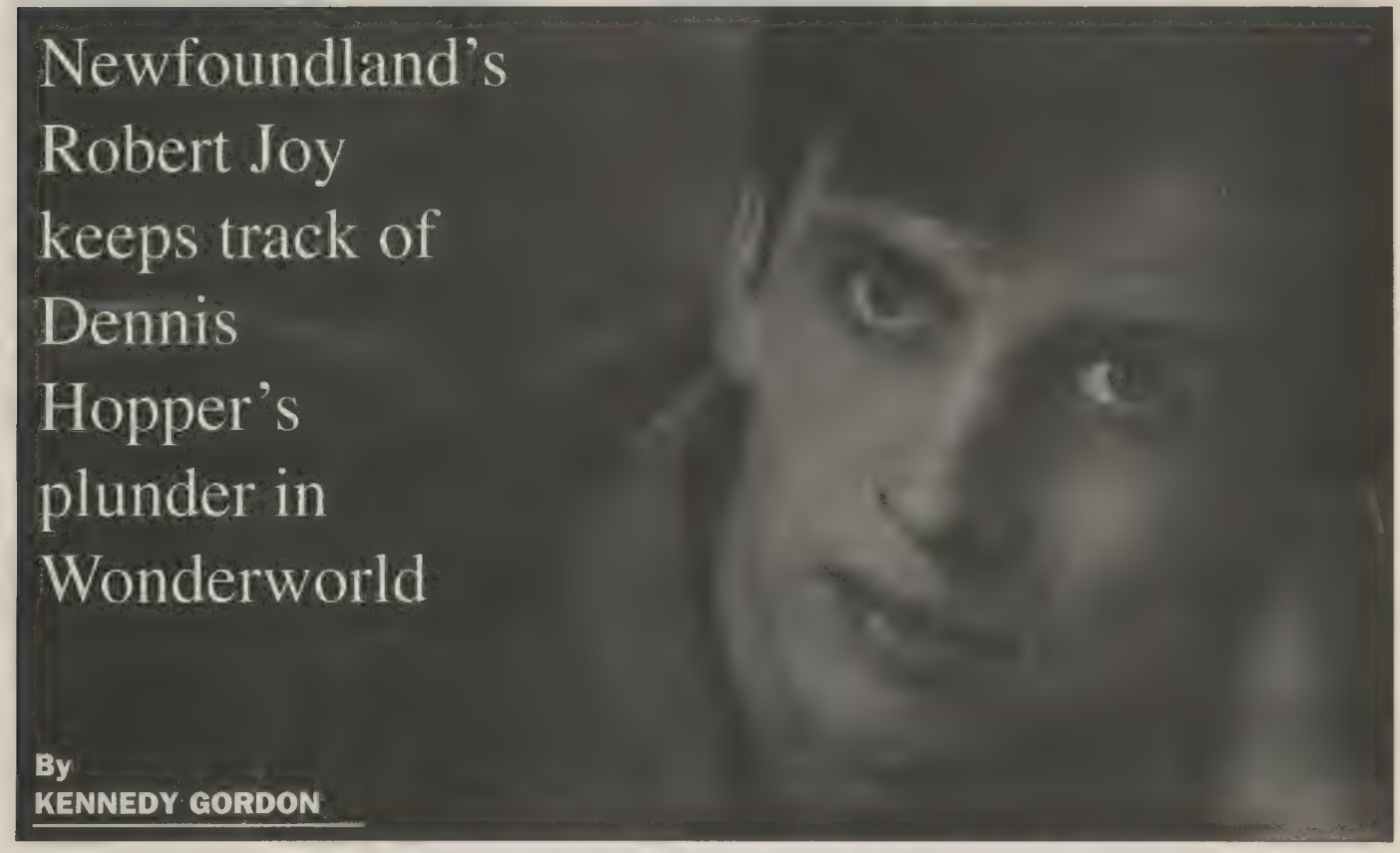
"They are all seeing the same thing out there and they are not all having illusions," she says.

Nevertheless, Gaal does not disregard the skeptics and considers their cautiousness to be useful in keeping her focused and on course.

"With skeptics, a lot of logical questions will be fired your way . . . but remember, just because you don't see something doesn't mean it doesn't exist."

LAURY LAVERGNE *is a Sudbury, Ontario-based freelance writer.*

The Ledger



Newfoundland's Robert Joy keeps track of Dennis Hopper's plunder in Wonderworld

By
KENNEDY GORDON

Precise and well-spoken Robert Joy is on the telephone from his New York City apartment.
This is not a description chosen at random.

This is, after all, a man whose credits include stage, screen, and television roles that see him invariably cast as a meticulous, intelligent man, which is exactly what he is.

The Newfoundland-born Joy has a role in the Kevin Costner sci-fi epic Waterworld.

It's a small role — if any part of this bloated, over-budget nightmare of a movie can be considered small — but one that Joy sounds a bit excited about.

"I play a member of the chief villain's brain trust, one of the colleagues or henchmen," he explains. "I'm The Ledger Guy — that's how my name appears in the script — and I count the beans. Our group goes around plundering from the Atolls, and I keep track of what our group plunders."

The accounts of problems on the Waterworld set are based on 'absolute zero,' says Joy

That group is led by Dennis Hopper as The Deacon, a maniacal and psychotic despot. Hopper reportedly plays the role to a T; the man has, after all, made himself a career playing over-the-top insane types.

"His role is the plum role in the whole piece," says Joy.

"Although I do like my own role. It's small but colorful, and I got to wear a really, really amazing costume."

But, Joy does rue the size of the part; it would have been nice to have a real name, at least.

"Let's just say there's a lot of people in this movie who'll be getting action figures before I do," he laughs.

Waterworld has become the most talked-about movie in recent years, but for all the wrong reasons.

The film, which follows the adventures of Costner's Mariner character, is set 500 years in the future, when the polar ice caps have melted and the world is flooded.

Costner, a member of the Atoller people, has developed gills and is locked in deadly conflict with the Deacon and his plunderers.

"The script is a rollicking action-adventure," says Joy, who, at the time of the interview still hadn't actually seen a finished cut.

"Think of it as The Road Warrior in the water. And my hope is that they managed to hold onto the script. If it isn't a good movie I can't see why. It was a fantastic script."

But the plot has paled in comparison to the real story.

With a scary budget — reported at over $180 million U.S. — and serious personality conflict on the set, Waterworld looked for a while like the movie that would never get finished.

Photo by Ben Glass, courtesy of Universal City Studios

Kevin Costner, left, plays the head of the Atoller people who are locked in a deadly conflict with a group of plunderers led by the Deacon — a plumb role that went to Dennis Hopper.

And when the film's mammoth floating set sank off the coast of Hawaii things seemed bleak.

"All this negative publicity is based on nothing, absolute zero," says Joy, who has the unique perspective of someone whose role was small enough to let him observe with some objectivity.

"It's been interesting to watch how this film has generated such a negative buzz. The stories about the sinking set, for instance; that happened after principal photography was finished on it, so it really didn't affect the story much."

The other disaster was the defection of director Kevin Reynolds during editing of the film. The same thing occured when Costner and Reynolds worked together on Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves, and some people started to suspect it would happen again.

> "If it isn't a good movie I can't see why. It was a fantastic script."

"I was told that would happen back in January," Joy says.

"It always happens when those two work together. Maybe it's for the best; Robin Hood turned out pretty well."

So big budget, on-set disasters, personality conflicts aside; for one Canadian actor Waterworld is still the movie to see this summer.

"I'll be first in line with my popcorn," he laughs.

"You don't often get to see a $200-million movie; talk about value for your money!"

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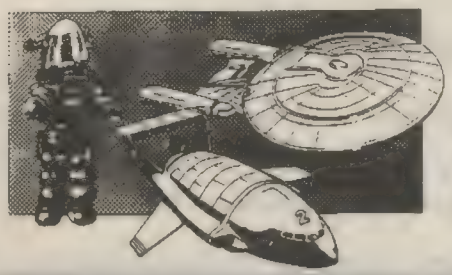

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VOYAGE
INTO NEW TERRITORY

On a ship filled with space pioneers, Garrett Wang blazes more than one trail

By
CHRIS KREJLGAARD

In a handful of years, Garrett Wang has gone from running around a courtyard at the University of California Los Angeles to running around some distant galaxy.

"I started out in pre-med, then pre-law and then Asian studies," Wang says of his early days at UCLA. "But all the time I was minoring in theatre.

"One summer while I was majoring in political science, I decided that I didn't want to go to law school.

"So I decided to learn who I was and make a career in entertainment."

Since he was always entertaining friends, who thought he should become a stand-up comedian, the decision to major in theatre arts wasn't such a huge jump.

The Riverside, California, native also points out that in many instances, being a lawyer today requires some acting experience.

And he got that experience under the tutelage of professor Jenny Roundtree. At the start of the first of two classes he had with her, the professor told the class to go outside and run around a nearby courtyard.

"So the entire class went out and ran around the courtyard.

We got some pretty strange looks," he chuckled.

After the class finished its collective jog, the class proceeded as usual. At the start of Wang's second class with Roundtree, the same instructions were given. Only this time Wang remained behind.

Roundtree asked him why.

"I told her that I had already run around the courtyard once and had felt a little silly doing it," he recounts.

Roundtree pointed out that every actor felt silly at one time or another.

"The entire exercise was to get people out of being self-conscious about what they were doing.

"She's an incredible woman. She just broke through so many barriers."

Wang credits Roundtree with giving him the push he needed to become an actor.

It was a push that led Wang to a stint as a member of the UFO Club on a Rice Krispies commercial and finally to the ops console at the rear of the Voyager's bridge.

And as important as Harry Kim (or at least an ops/communications officer) is to the operation of a starship,Wang recognizes the importance of his character to the series and to its viewers.

"Harry is the eyes of the audience on the ship," Wang notes, adding that Kim is probably the only one on the show that viewers can truly appreciate.

"I think that people can relate to him more than they can to Neelix, the doctor or Kes. While they're great characters and they bring a great deal to the show, how can the audience relate to a hologram or an alien from another galaxy?"

And there is a certain vulnerability in the character, that both the audience and Wang can appreciate.

"There's a lot of stuff that this kid has been put through," Wang says in reference to the fact the character has been separated from the focal point of his life — his family, has been asked to take on important roles on the bridge even though he's had little training.

"There's a little bit of insecurity going on, because he isn't sure that he can even do the job."

"Harry is the eyes of the audience on the ship. I think that people can relate to him more than they can to Neelix, the doctor or Kes. While they're great characters and they bring a great deal to the show, how can the audience relate to a hologram or an alien?"

It is this last aspect that Wang says is particularly easy for him to appreciate because of his relatively recent emergence into acting.

As Harry Kim, Wang is a member of a small band of Starfleet officers and Maquis members stranded some 70 years from Federation space.

And as an actor, Wang faces the formidable task of being equal to actors who have been in the business for upwards of twenty years.

"To go from this (the cereal commercial) to being on the most well-known series in the world, it's a big jump," he notes. "My fellow cast mates have, for the most part, been in the business for 10 or 20 years. So I feel not only as Ensign Kim being the novice on board, but also as Garrett being the novice.

"Although, I'm definitely confident that I can hold my own with anyone else on the crew."

Besides pushing himself professionally so he is not overpowered by any of the other more-experienced actors, Wang also has to deal with a number of other distractions associated with being on one of the most-watched and dissected shows on television.

The series follows in the rather large footsteps of Star Trek: The Next Generation and is the cornerstone for the United Paramount Network. Late this spring, network officials announced that it was gutting its entire schedule. The only show that is returning for the 1995-1996 television season is Voyager.

The decision was a vote of confidence to the creative team behind and in front of the camera. And it also stresses the series importance to the corporate plans of the parent company.

Add to that, the expectations of some rather demanding fans and lesser actors could easily wilt.

"I don't have time to focus on that," Wang points out. "There is such a drain on the physical and mental parts of each actor that no one really sits there and says 'Oh my gosh is Joe Smith in Iowa going to be offended by this?' We really try our best to put out the best product we can."

There is also the perception that Wang is a role model for young Asians — although he prefers pop icon to the title of role model.

Photo by Robbie Robinson/ courtesy of Paramount Pictures

While Tom Paris, played by Robert Duncan McNeil, is a character that is at odds with the decisions he has made in the past — like joining the Maquis and then being caught — Harry Kim has personal demons of his own to face. Demons such as insecurity created by his being thrust into a crucial role with little preparation.

On a crew where the captain and chief engineer are women, the first officer is a native American and the security chief is portrayed by an Afro-American, it has been very easy for critics to dub the Voyager the S.S. Politically Correct.

But Wang says he knew from day one that his character would be more than just a token Asian on the crew.

"When I was auditioning for the role, I had read the script for Caretaker which was a Tom Paris-B'elanna story," he said.

"But it was obvious from that script that Harry was important to the show because they were really using this guy a lot (in the episode)."

But while Wang says that the character is still important to the series, he notes that Kim's appearances in the series have declined a bit.

"Because there are nine regulars there has to be a revolving episode policy where Neelix is concentrated on in one episode and in one hour you don't have that much time to do justice to more than one character.

The policy means that there are episodes where some characters have a handful of lines and then take the week off.

Wang must also deal with the inevitable comparison between himself and a certain navigator on an earlier incarnation in the Star Trek universe.

In fact, it is a comparison that Wang relishes. Especially when it comes to Asian representation on television.

"George Takei had the first major television role for an Asian," Wang begins. "Then there was Jack Soo (of Barney Miller fame), Dustin Nguyen (21 Jump Street and Sea Quest DSV) and now me.

"You can count all the number of major television roles for Asian actors on one hand.

"It's a sad state of things when there's only been four actors in forty years."

Wang adds that he hopes his role will open the doors to more Asian actors to appear in key roles on television series.

One of the high points of his short time associated with Star Trek was a meeting with the actor who Wang believes opened the door for the few Asian actors who have been on television — George Takei.

"We did an interview together, and he was genuinely happy for me. He's a true class act.

"He said that I was doing a good job and that I should keep the writers on their toes."

In the episodes where Harry Kim is the focal point of the plot, Wang hopes that writers begin to examine the personal side of his character — especially when it comes to his family.

"It would be nice to do something on his background," he said. "I would like to explore how he feels about his parents, since they were such an important part of his life. Or even about some of his personal interests, like playing the clarinet.

"Just to flesh out the character more, to put a few more angles on him, that's my main concern."

Among the first season episodes that Wang is particularly proud of — and one which he believes defined his character more fully — was the episode in which Kim is transported to another dimension and the only way for him to return to his friends requires him to die for a short period. In the bargain, Kim gets to ponder his own mortality.

Wang does hope that at least one angle of his character does not get lost as the Harry Kim persona is fleshed out during the coming episodes — his dry wit.

After all, Wang notes all the other comedic elements in the show has gone to Neelix (Ethan Phillips) who goes over the top on many an occassion and the doctor (Robert Picardo) who offers sparkling examples of sarcasm.

"There needs to be some balance," Wang points out.

Job forces artist to be Star Trek expert

By
CHRIS KREJLGAARD

Terry Pallot's small studio is filled with Star Trek items.

Comic books lie in boxes on the floors, there are photos of the crew and some of the show's vessels lying on the desk, on the bookcase in the corner and one photo of DS-9 is tacked to the wall above his drawing table.

Parsec photo by JEL

Terry Pallot's studio is filled with a variety of Star Trek items and photographs all of which are needed to please some rather discerning fans.

It is all part and parcel of being one of the artists in the relm of Star Trek comic books. Unlike other comic book titles, the Star Trek books carry special demands for writers and artists.

With episodes shown in syndication on a daily basis, readers know how the characters and the space vessels are supposed to look. And they demand that the writers and artists remain true to the show.

"This type of photo-realistic artwork is totally different from any other type of artwork," explains Margaret Clark, the editor of Star Trek The Next Generation for DC Comics in New York.

"If Wonder Woman is sitting at a table, the artist can just draw a wall behind her.

"In Star Trek, you can't do that. People know what piece of equipment should be in a particular room and they let us know when we've blown something.

"There's lots of research involved in producing this title and the guys get every bit of it," Clark explains and adds that there were more than seven pounds of reference materials waiting for her when she took over The Next Generation two years ago.

In other words, everyone involved in the titles must be experts in the Star Trek universe. A feat that Pallot has apparently accomplished.

Pallot became known in the comic book industry for his work as inker on Malibu Comic's Deep Space Nine title. A task he still performs, albeit infrequently, since he took on a similar role with Star Trek The Next Generation.

The photos and the assorted other items have helped Pallot maintain the standard of accuracy that Clark has set for the book.

And they have helped him catch miscues that were made earlier in the process.

"Once on DS-9, the artist had the drawn in the photon tubes the wrong way, so I checked it against the photograph and corrected it," Pallot explains.

The photographs, particularly those of the cast and crew, also allows Pallot to provide detailed features for all of the characters.

It was this attention to detail that led Pallot to DC Comics.

When she took over The Next Generation title two years ago, Clark had plans to do a cross-over between the DC title and Malibu Comics' Deep Space Nine title.

One challenge to drawing members of the Star Trek Universe is the fact that fans know what the characters must look like.

"I liked Terry's work over Gord Purcell's pencils and I asked him if he wanted to ink Gord on The Next Generation. He said 'yes'."

But it was not only the idea of keeping a well-meshed artistic machine working that led Clark to Pallot.

"He has a good understanding of light to dark and he knows the material and its subtleties," she explains in reference to such aspects of Star Trek as how characters would hold a phaser, how many pips should be on the collar of a particular rank or even if a vessel had been destroyed in an earlier issue or episode.

In addition, Clark also appreciates his approach to being an inker.

"Terry is someone who sees a page and thinks about what he could bring to it," she says. "He's not an inker who is happy just going over someone else's pencils. "Terry and Gord play off each other and I think it makes for a better book."

Pallot's joining the title at issue 75 is the high-water mark for his short career in the comic book field.

A native of Goulais River, Ontario, Pallot studied illustration at Sheridan College of Applied Arts and Technology in Oakville, Ontario.

"I was sending samples out to everyone," Pallot explains. "I got three or four small jobs that way."

But it was a tip from one of his classmates that led him to Malibu Comics and Deep Space Nine in 1989.

"I begged them to let me do DS-9," he recalls.

"Finally, they said 'yes,' and I kept on from there."

Besides Deep Space Nine, Pallot also inked Planet of the Apes and Subspecies. He also pencilled and inked a number of issues of Paul the Samurai and a special issue of Alien Nation.

Pallot

Prior to being hired on at Malibu Comics, Pallot had worked with a handful of alternate comic book publishers.

His first work appeared in Shattered Earth number 7, which published in the spring of 1989. Less than ten years since entering the field, Pallot's portfolio now numbers almost 80 issues.

Like most artists, Pallot was a doodler during his younger years.

"I always liked drawing," he notes, but adds that drawing comic books hadn't been an early part of his career plans.

It was only when he was preparing to enter college on a computer scholarship, that he decided that his future lay in the art world.

At the time, his favorite artist was George Perez, which is easy to understand given the detailed work that is characteristic of Pallot's work.

With a handful of years as an inker behind him, Pallot is hoping to test his meddle as a writer and a penciller.

He has already drafted an Ensign Roe story as his first solo effort.

If he succeeds, Pallot will become one of the rare artists who are considered a type of triple-threat in the comic book industry.

But Clark explains that production schedules conspire to make such artists a rarity.

For inking alone, it takes Pallot between three and five hours to complete a single page.

So being able to write, pencil and ink books on a regular basis would be the comic book equivalent of winning baseball's Triple Crown.

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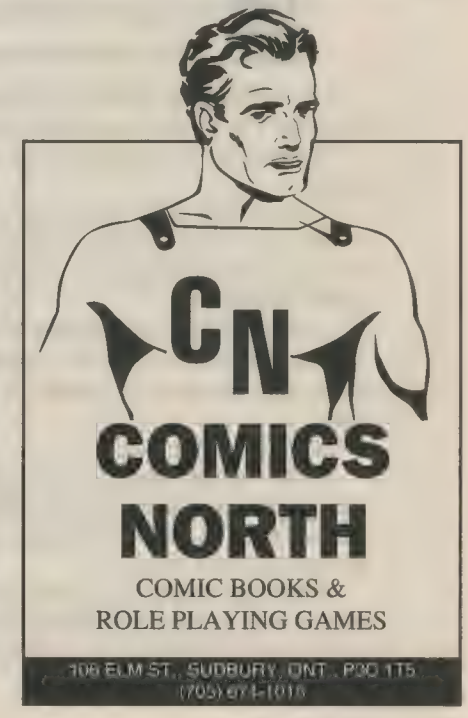


In space, some battles can't be won . . .

TARK

Written by BRIAN BELFRY
Illustrated by JOHN TKACHUK

The alarm kept sounding.

Tark continued to toss and turn in his sleeping module. That Godforsaken alarm, why in the name of Calev wouldn't it quit? The dream usually didn't . . .

He suddenly sat upright, his heart pounding in his temples. The ringing continued. He wasn't dreaming!

He frantically searched for his remote, his mind racing.

The last theft attempt had been eight months ago. After that two-way massacre no one had attempted landings here. Nothing gets past the SECURITY ENFORCERS.

Tark shook his head. It must be some Slantavians high on stardust. No one can land on Poris without being detected by the computer. It simply couldn't be done.

He found the remote.

He hit the EXIT button sending the module's casing sliding noiselessly back. Tark, scrambled out of the module, instinctively flipping the remote over to hit the CLOSET button.

A thin panel opened up and revealed The Suit, Tark's only clothing and protection. Black and shimmering, The Suit was an incredible invention.

Tark never ceased to be amazed at what this innocent-looking garment could do. He usually took a moment to scrutinize it - or was he worshipping it? - before donning the one-piece garment, but this time he hurried to put it on.

The weight was always deceiving. The Suit was about 15 pounds in Earthen weight. Slightly heavier in Poris's gravity. The main reason being the ultimate in micro-circuitry technology woven into the garment.

Despite the asteroid's -45 Celsius surface temperature The Suit was all Tark needed to have when forced to go out on foot and make the occasional repairs to the security system surrounding the vaults.

Tark had stored all his other clothing after the first month of his three-year assignment guarding the vaults. It was more practical to just put on The Suit.

It handled all his needs. He had found, although he hadn't mentioned it to Supervisor Markan who briefed him on The Suit's abilities, that he even felt slightly stronger and more confident wearing it.

Confidence surged in him now as he pulled the skin-tight fabric over his feet and hands. In the end, he almost looked like an underwater explorer instead of the head of — and only member of — security at the Poris outpost.

Tark grabbed the remote again depressing the ARSENAL button. This time the right-hand wall slid up revealing his defenses. He was glad he insisted on having his weaponry installed in the bedroom. The intruder — intruders? — could even be on the other side of the entrance to his sleeping area.

How long was that alarm going off?

He automatically slapped his Grato-laser shiv onto his right calf. The shiv was a personal weapon not even known to S.E. It was constantly under a scanning shield and could not be detected unless used.

The shiv stuck to The Suit, another handy feature. The Suit had enough of a magnetic field to make sure the weapon would not be bumped off.

He grabbed down a Starburst "shotgun." The armament resembled a sawed-off shotgun from the Ancient West but instead of pellets it fired a concentrated laser blast. The blast would punch a two-by-two-foot hole in one-inch steel. The S.E. had a no-prisoner policy.

The Starburst has ten charges to each ammunition unit. Tark grabbed two spare units and slapped them to the outside of his left thigh. The field held them fast, just like the shiv.

Each unit pack was about four inches in diameter and only weighed two and a half pounds each.

Tark hardly noticed the weight on his leg, besides the strengthening ability he was sure The Suit had given him, his muscles had increased tremendously working in Poris's heavier gravitational field.

Tossing his remote back to his sleeping module, Tark inserted his forefinger into the CLOSE slot on the side of the module.

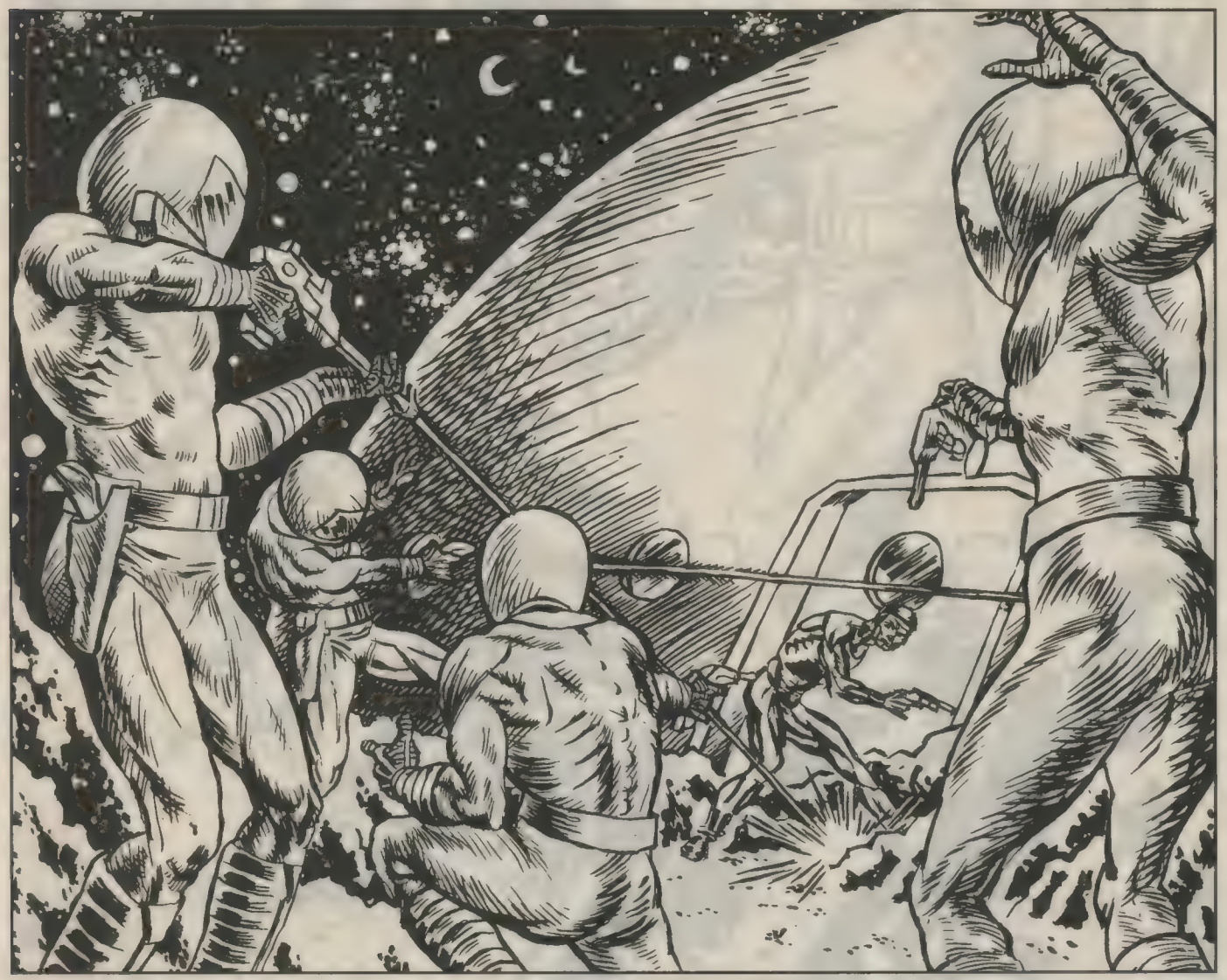
He placed his hand onto the door plate to activate the door allowing him to enter his general quarters and command station.

A command prompt appeared and Tark quickly accessed the security program and got a map of the compound up on the screen. The computer image map was calculated from actual surveillance cameras in the area which were equipped with heat-activated photo cells.

Asking for a current image Tark spotted a humanoid form in the general quarters area blinking on screen.

"That's you, you idiot. Where the hell is the intruder?"

No other form showed on the screen.



Whatever it is, thought Tark, it's not human or its cold-blooded, making it perfect for Poris.

What set the alarm off?

The emergency console showed there had been some kind of disturbance near a waste bin not far from the vault entrance.

Whatever ever it is, it must have thought it could tunnel into the vault from the disposal bin, mused Tark.

"Smart bastard." Anyway, it was an idea Tark had as well when he had considered trying to find out what he was guarding. If he hadn't feared S.E. punishment he might have tried it himself.

Well, the next step would be to take a look over the area and waste this jerk, or robot drone which amounted to the same thing as far as Tark was concerned.

Tark started to step away from the console when he realized something.

"It would be just like the movies to forget to call in to head office about an intruder on the asteroid, dufus."

Tark shook his head smiling to himself and punched a small red button on the front of the console.

The computer would automatically notify head office that he was in the process of tracking an intruder down and transfer every move Tark had made so far.

Cameras were constantly running everywhere.

S.E. would sometimes check in just for laughs to make sure everything was being done by the book.

More than one guard had been caught with his pants down and they hadn't just been relieving themselves.

Tark headed for the outside, The Suit,' hood enveloped his head as soon as his flesh felt the frigid air.

It was deathly quiet once out into the asteroids atmosphere. Tark hesitated a moment before moving on.

Is this the day I die?

It was a thought which hadn't occurred to Tark in eight months, when the last attempt took place. As he started toward the vaults. Tark's subconscious drifted back to that day . . .

He had only been on Poris two days. He was wearing a prototype of The Suit which S.E. had told him was simply to protect him from Poris' cold.

Still in the middle of his orientation video, Tark heard the alarm sound.

My God, action already. Grabbing his Blastur, Tark — already wearing The Suit — was outside before he realized it.

The first blast went through his upper arm.

Tark immediately went into a combat roll, coming up spraying a series of blasts before ducking behind a stalagmite outcrop for cover.

The bandits were already on foot outside their own craft. Their faces were hidden with some type of space helmet.

All Tark could see were reflections of Poris stark landscape mirrored across the front of the helmet.

It didn't matter. Tark didn't have to see them to know they wanted him dead.

In his quick glance before rolling behind cover he knew there were at least half-a-dozen of them.

Tark's left arm already felt numb. What the hell had he been thinking. Rushing right out without even checking to see why the alarm was sounding. These jerks weren't even near the vaults but right out front. Obviously, ready to wipe out the security post before taking their time robbing . . . whatever.

He hit the signal button on his thigh to notify S.E. he was under fire.

The cargo ship couldn't be more than a few hours away. As their latest proven fighter, he should be able to last until then.

His arm felt warm but the numbness was already going away. In fact . . . in fact he could feel the numbness leaving he was almost ready to . . .

The next blast ripped through his shoulders. The blast came straight through his body to spray rock chips up into his face.

Bastards had shot straight through the rock which was proving to be less than adequate cover. Tark could not remember feeling such pain before immediately dropping face down.

He could feel his own warm blood flowing over his back and around his sides. He could also hear triumphant yells from behind.

All Tark could see were reflections of *Poris stark landscape mirrored across the front of the helmet. It didn't matter. Tark didn't have to see them to know they wanted him dead.*

But as fast as the pain had come, it already appeared to be waning. Tark felt like he had been hit with an adrenaline shot as strength surged back into his body.

The crunch of asteroid's rock could be heard right next to him.

Tark flipped over and for a millisecond stared into his own face mirrored in his opponents space helmet before pulling the trigger on his Blastur.

His face disappeared.

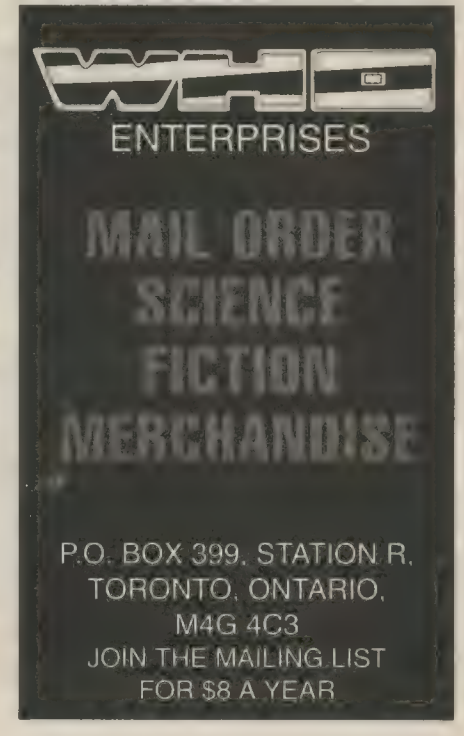
In fact, the whole head of his opponent disappeared and the body fell onto Tark covering him up. Absurdly all Tark could think of was that he had just shot himself.

Still stunned about his new-found recuperative powers, Tark felt good. The initial shock and pain were already becoming a distant memory. Tark couldn't believe it. If not for the blood, already drying up on him on the inside of The Suit he would have wondered if he had been shot.

Using the headless body of his opponent as a shield, Tark stood up and was immediately knocked flying as his opponents decided they weren't worried about keeping their comrade's form intact.

The blasts missed Tark but he managed to put holes through the torsos of two of his adversaries.

Now in full view of his opponents, Tark saw he still had four left to go.



The Suit's had a special purpose, one Tark was just discovering

"We won be losing to a rookie," said one voice as they began to open fire.

Tark, wondering how they could have know he was a recent academy graduate, decided it was time to make a last stand, and simply opened fire in return.

Laser blast shot through his arms and body, but before crumpling to the ground, Tark also spotted the S.E. cargo ship on the horizon.

The next images Tark saw he was lying on an operating table inside his outpost.

Several S.E. top brass, who he recognized from the training academy, were on hand .

He had been told he was part of a new age for the S.E. troops and would be closely watched.

Great, and here on the first sign of trouble he was already in pieces.

He could only remember snippets of the conversation around him "It was too soon . . . hardly had worn The Suit at all . . . He'll live"

The last two words were all Tark needed to know.

He closed his eyes and let oblivion take him.

Tark started to make his way toward the vaults. He had been back to Poris after only a week of having various parts of his body taken away by laser blast.

Isn't technology wonderful?

Several spotlights lit the way as he advanced to his unknown foe. Poris was in darkness or light for six weeks at a time and he was just one week into the night. The three days of twilight would have given him a better advantage.

Now with more than a month of complete darkness ahead of him any opponent would be tough to deal with. This nemesis had obviously done his homework before attacking the outpost.

Tark had plenty of homework to do himself over the last eight months, especially learning about The Suit.

What an invention that turned out to be . . .

Soon after starting back at Poris, Tark had learned the Suit had many more capabilities than just keeping him warm. In fact, if Poris had been a tropical climate, it would have kept him cool.

No matter what the outside temperature, the skin-tight Suit kept its wearer comfortable. It did serve as some protection but not to laser blasts although scientists at S.E. said they were working on that.

The Suit also monitored Tark's respiration and heartbeat and through an electrical wiring in its hood kept track of activity in Tark's brain. Scientists said the information was needed in other fields and S.E. was able to sell that knowledge in order to advance its own research into weapons and security systems.

Tark didn't know if the hood had anything to do with it, but he hadn't had a headache since arriving on Poris. The only annoyance which still plagued man. The common cold wasn't really cured, of course, but two pills of Tylenol 27 and the virus was out of your system in 30 minutes.

The Suit definitely had built up Tark's strength but the scientists hadn't told Tark anything about that and he wasn't about to mention it if they didn't already know.

The magnetic field was another nice touch. If he ran into any old-style weapons a simple touch to his right palm reverse the field effectively deflecting incoming missiles or even sending them in reverse.

The Suit had also been responsible for Tark's amazing recuperation powers. But had its limits, such as replacing blood Tark had lost when several blasts had gone through his body at once. Still he had survived and his scars will be there for all time for him to brag about to his future partners.

Tark arrived to find the vault doors open. Crates and crates were stacked inside with no markings. There were hundreds of them.

It was too dark to see any ceiling and the stacks of crates disappeared into blackness. New weapons? Was that all? The crates were only about ten-feet square so they sure weren't storing spaceships. Unless they were dehydrated or something, Tark laughed to himself. He could see the ads now. Instant spaceship . . . just add Saturn dust.

Tark pulled out another S.E. invention. It was a hand-held monitor about the size of a old-time compass. The monitor - called a Trackr© — detected movement with a thirty-foot radius.

Nothing appeared on the screen. Great.

Tark advanced into the vault. He had several aisles to choose from and they all seemed to extend forever. The intruder had not tried to smash his way into any of the crates right at the entrance, which worried Tark.

> 'Greetings Tark.
> Are you ready for battle?'
> The voice was hauntingly familiar,
> Tark thought it sounded like one of his
> fellow cadets from the academy,
> but he couldn't quite place it.

A normal bandit would have simply slapped a transport icon onto the nearest one and tried to beam out before security had arrived.

Either this intruder had inside information of something located within the vaults or . . . or what?

Tark chose the centre aisle and began his search.

The light from outside disappeared behind him. The blackness within the vault appeared to stop the light from getting in rather than the light penetrating the vault. After about a hundred metres, Tark saw a dim radiance ahead. Continuing toward the light he came to a open area. The crates now formed a circle, although they had appeared linear during his search.

Tark's Trackr beeped.

Sure enough directly across the opening Tark spotted the intruder. Again his adversary was wearing a facemask which mirrored their surroundings and he appeared to be wearing . . . The Suit!

"Greetings Tark. Are you ready for battle?"

The voice was hauntingly familiar, Tark thought it sounded

Continued on page 32

When you're practically immortal, sometimes you need a bit of diversion

For a Change

Written by MELANIE MARTTILA
Illustrated by SHERRI BASSETT

Gabe had just resurrected me for the fifty-sixth time. I wondered if he would ever get tired of it, get tired of me, but I knew that was too much to ask for.

He was such a bloody optimist, in fact, all of my friends were, and maybe that was what kept them going in what I liked to call the incessantly stagnant times we lived in.

For me, it was all I could do to stave off the suicidal passion the times fostered in me.

And all I could do never lasted more than a couple of months.

It wasn't that I was bored to death, or chronically depressed, or anything. It was more the intense visceral sensation of wrongness that nothing I did could eradicate. I tried everything—therapy, creative writing, stress-relieving work-outs, pets, lovers—and none of it worked. Now I was approaching my sixtieth birthday and thanks to the Transmat — the so-called saviour of humanity — I hadn t changed a bit in over forty years.

First, global transportation was revolutionized by the development of dependable matter transportation devices, but then, as the technology improved, innovators began to find new uses for what had come to be called Transmats. Some brilliant soul actually applied the laws of conservation of matter and energy — that energy (matter) can be neither created nor destroyed, but merely changes from one form to another — and began experimenting with material waste, not simply changing its form to energy for transportation and reconstruction, but actually rearranging its molecular structure to form a different material upon reconstruction. The effect on our culture was amazing.

Any material need could be met by the Transmat once the appropriate molecular pattern had been programmed into the machine.

Once Transmats started being mass produced, it seemed that poverty, homelessness, and starvation disappeared overnight.

Business, manufacturing, crime, pollution, and environmental exploitation were soon to follow.

A surgeon began to use the Transmat to perform operations and organ transplants and before long, plastic surgeons began to use Transmat patterns to rejuvenate and redesign their patients bodies.

Soon, the implanting of a health chip was mandatory for everyone, and with its assistance, any infirmity or physical inconvenience could be overcome, even death.

Unfortunately, the increasing numbers of Transmat immortals meant that few couples could have children. People were forcibly sterilized, and though achieving perfection had resulted in an existence devoid of individuality and freedom, it was taken for granted that everyone would want to be resurrected and returned to their perfect lives.

I guess it hadn't even occurred to Gabe to ask me. Mind you, after fifty-six suicides . . . I figured he just couldn't be that stupid.

But it was even more difficult to accept the lengths he went to keep me around. I didn't want to know his reasons.

I regained consciousness slowly, relaxing into it after that first intense shock — I m alive! — and reluctantly tuned into Gabe's wonderfully modulated voice as he coaxed me from the depths of oblivion.

"Sweetie? It's Gabe.

"You're all right. They managed to save your chip — Damn! — so everything's O.K . . ."

But everything wasn't O.K. I was alive and approaching consciousness with a speed that frightened me, and every word Gabe uttered brought me one step closer to seeing his perfect, white teeth again, his flawless complexion, and the corona of auburn hair that so reminded me of my own too-beautiful appearance.

Soon I would awaken in what I had once thought of as my dream-home, but the two-storey Victorian farmhouse only held the promise of unending torture, and the sterile passion of Gabe's dull green eyes.

"Rachel?" he asked as he rubbed my hand absently.

"Sweetie, how are you feeling?"

I sat up and nodded dumbly, then closed my eyes again, waiting for the question Gabe would ask, the same question he always asked when I woke up.

"Tell me, what did it feel like?"

"I just tried to blow my head off with a 12-gauge shotgun, and you want to know how it felt?"

God, sometimes he made me so sick. The coward would never commit suicide himself, even if I promised to reconstruct him — and I think even he realized I would never do that — but he had this intense and desperate need to know how death felt.

The funny part of it was that I honestly had no idea. I could never be sure if what I experienced was death or not. The last five times I'd killed myself, I hadn't felt a thing. It was almost like heaven had retreated from me, and I felt it would serve me right if I was punished for my repeated and sacrilegious, if involuntary, resurrections. Other people had been dead long enough to confirm that there was some kind of existence after death, but no one could agree on exactly what it was.

Everything had been reported, from white lights and astral travel to hellish visions that made Dante's Inferno seem like the puerile imaginings of a five-year old by comparison, but the closest I'd ever come to understanding the afterlife was the eerie sensation of fighting my way through a kind of red soupy mist.

It was almost impossible to keep it from swallowing me whole because my fingers couldn t find it to fight it off, and even as I struggled my way out of it, I found myself being sucked back in.

The sense of wrongness that was my recurrent nemesis in daily life was a mere echo of the terrible evil in which I was suddenly enveloped. I did get a glimpse of something beyond the mist, however, and what I saw made me so happy — and I mean really happy, not whatever passes for happy here — that I thought I could do anything to get to it, even find a way to escape my inescapable prison. But then I would feel a tap on my shoulder.

Unable to resist the urge to see who or what it was, I always turned, and the redness took me back — brought me back — to Gabe. I never quite remembered what it was I saw beyond the red mist, but I'm glad in a way.

I'm sure if I remembered, it would make living all that much more unbearable. The whole experience could have been the product of an oxygen-starved brain, but it was all I had, so I held on to it.

I really wanted was the freedom to find that bliss one of these days, but first I would have to get away from those damned Transmats. Gabe's expectant pause had long ago yawned into an uncomfortable silence. It stretched for a couple more minutes before I finally answered his question.

Same as ever, I sighed, but there was more fear before, and absolutely nothing after I pulled the trigger.

I'd never told Gabe about the red mist, or that unnameable happiness beyond it.

"Lucky the blast didn't shatter your chip," Gabe said cheerfully as he assisted me to the breakfast table and returned to the Transmat to literally make me some breakfast.

"There aren't many people out there who would try what you did, Sweetie."

He actually had the nerve to admire my bravery. It was hard for me to understand how he could mistake me for a hedonist; I was anything but a thrill-seeker. The hedonists were something of a side-effect of Transmat technology.

The Transmat could resurrect, so people figured that they could consider themselves immortal, and with that assurance, the Epicureans, hedonists, and thrill-seekers of all colours started to come out to play. They started innocently enough, eating, drinking, and loving to excess, until they found themselves obese, or with liver disease, brain damage, or whatever consequences resulted from their drug of choice.

Then a quick trip to the fix-it machine, and they could start the whole cycle of debauchery all over again. Soon, however, the novelty of gluttony wore off, and the Epicureans started to seek other sensual experiences to broaden their horizons.

Now they performed dangerous feats and defied death just for fun. Some of them even killed themselves on a regular basis in order to collect experience, like entomologists collect butterflies.

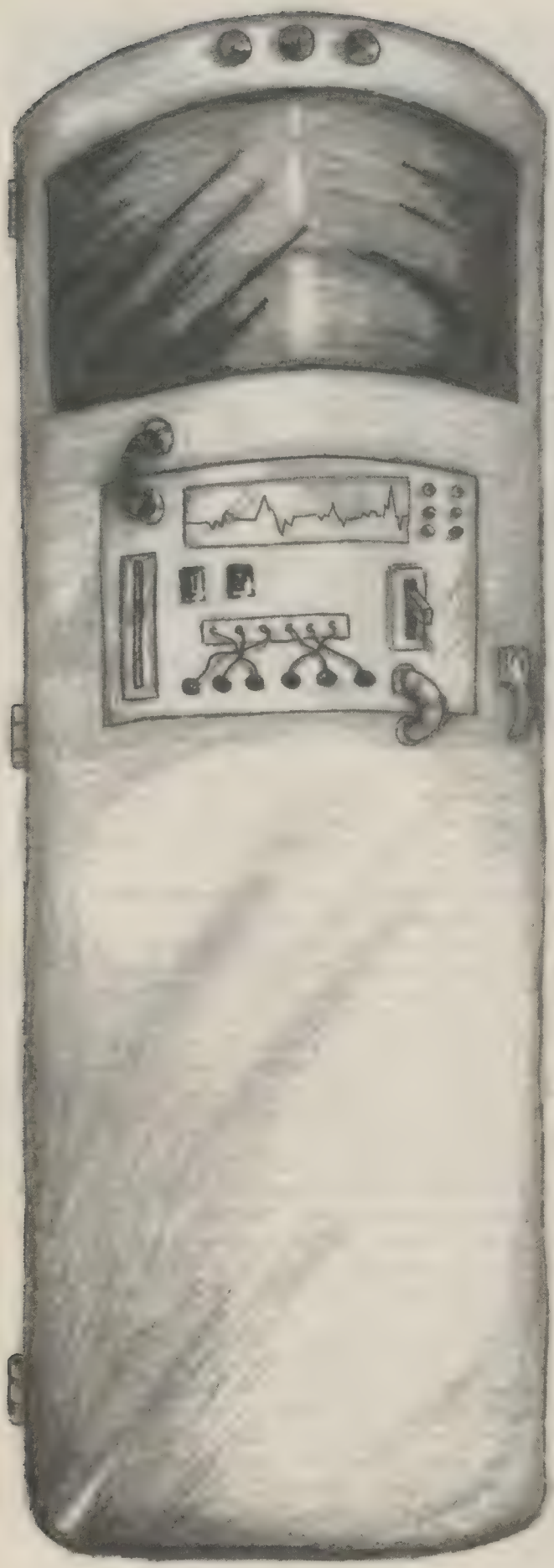
Only I tried to commit suicide on a regular basis, and it had less than nothing to do with adding to my catalogue of experience. That's why I found Gabe's admiration so irritating.

Strangely, he didn't question me further throughout the morning, and he was being particularly attentive today, which made me suspicious. He definitely wanted something.

After submitting to a morning of pampering, I finally lost my temper and demanded to know what was going on. Gabe sighed.

I just wanted to keep you away from your mail. Something came in for you last night after you shot yourself.

I leaped to my computer at the word mail, already opening the file as Gabe



continued.

"I know you'll accept. I know you'll jump at the chance to go. It's not like I ever really meant anything to you anyway."

"Simpering bastard," I thought. *"How dare you make me feel guilty? I never meant anything to you either!"*

I threw back cruelly as I scanned the document on my screen.

This was it —my acceptance to the space program. I was scheduled for the next deep-space exploration mission. Finally, I'd be free of the Transmats, to live a proper life on an Earth-type planet more than thirty light-years away from Earth

It was the chance of a lifetime — the chance of five lifetimes — and I paused to gaze nostalgically out my window at the odd cluster of houses that made up my neighbourhood.

Would I miss this tolerant little community where Jose Ptarmigan's tepee nestled beside the Seymours' fibreglass bubble, and the field where we would gather on special occasions? Would I miss the national nature reserve that was in walking distance of my house, where I could watch deer and foxes rear their young? Would I miss the corner Transmat glamourously advertising instant transportation and eternal youth like the Hollywood marquees it was modelled after?

Would I miss Gabe? I turned my eyes toward the antique mirror on the wall, to my gleaming smile and my clear, hazel eyes, and blinked away a tear. I'll miss the foxes, I decided. I'd been waiting for this call for nearly twenty-five years, and my sudden whoop of triumph almost drowned out Gabe's final mutter.

You're wrong, you know. He'd probably apply for permission to clone me as soon as I left.

Poor man.

I woke up to the sound of ten hydraulically-powered cryo-chamber doors opening simultaneously. We'd all been frozen separately because even under normal circumstances it had been proven that familiarity does indeed breed contempt.

In the limited space of the ship, well, let's just say we didn't want to find out how much contempt we could breed.

After everyone had emerged and introduced themselves, there was an awkward silence.

There were only two other women on board, Mandy and Alison, and it turned out that they had been labeled thrill-seekers like myself. Strangely, however, only one of the men, our pilot, a dark Adonis who called himself Frank, was a hedonist. The other six had somehow managed to wrest their autonomy from the grasping hands of family and friends to maintain some control over their own lives and remain imperfect in a perfect world.

It had to be said. Someone had to say it.

We're a ship full of misfits!" Out of the corner of my eye, I could see the painfully thin Daniel nod in agreement.

A motley crew, he sighed.

Socially undesirable, added a third person, Dan. We had three Daniels aboard, which I thought a bizarre coincidence, and Dan was distinguishable from the others as the ugliest individual on the craft. He had a nose like a lump of putty stuck in the middle of a face almost too round to be human between two closely-spaced, black, pig-like eyes. He was slightly obese too, which added to the porcine impression he gave, but he seemed a highly intelligent and kind person for all his physical deformities.

Dan shrugged and sauntered over to the computer console, a task that we had all been successfully avoiding up to that point.

The rest of us stood dumbly, listening to the tappity-tap of Dan's plump fingers on the display unit and the asthmatic wheezing of George, who had chosen his name because he was

the third Daniel. Dan turned his chair around slowly and looked at us with eyes that now approached normal size.

Our flight-plan must obviously be erroneous, he stammered, "As far as I can tell, we've followed it closely, but the Kiroki Station isn't here!"

"We're a prison-ship," said an acne-inflicted man named Trace.

Although crime had been largely eliminated on Earth by the advent of the Transmat, there were individuals who were persistent in their destruction. Nobody knew the mind well enough to safely remove the criminal parts of the psyche, however, and it was decided to ostracize these people on prison ships.

They were basically cryogenically frozen and sent off-planet on a random trajectory. If they didn t crash into a planet or fall into a star, they would wake up almost one hundred years after they left the earth to fend for themselves in the depths of space.

Of course, even the prison-ships were equipped with a Transmat. People had to live with themselves. The possibility that our mission was just a prison-ship of another colour was something we had all prepared ourselves for, but that didn't keep it from twisting the hopeful feeling in my gut until it resembled fear.

"Is there a planet we could land on?" asked Alison as she fretted with her shirt-tails.

"I'm not entirely sure," Dan replied. "The stars don't quite correlate with the charts in the computer, so I . . ."

George cleared his throat to speak, "Well, um, we could use the, um, Transmat."

His suggestion elicited an audible hiss from behind me. "To make more, um, fuel so we can, um, get to some livable place."

I snorted.

"It was because of those things that I . . ." gesturing emphatically at the Transmat, "that I left Earth, and now it has to go and be so damned . . . useful."

A shudder gripped me as I uttered the last word.

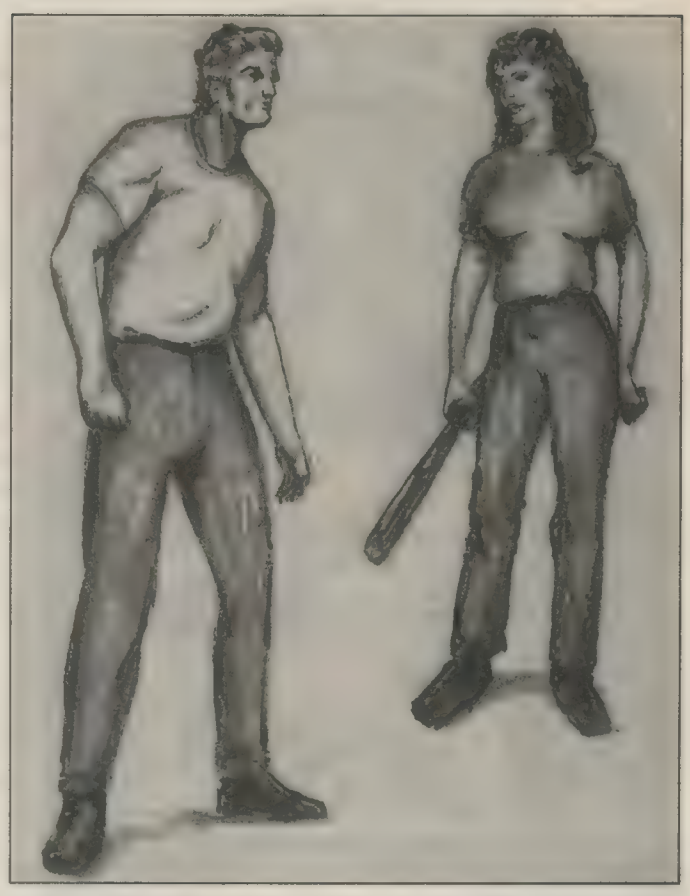
Ironic, isn't it? Mandy smiled uncertainly, but then Frank advanced, heroically brandishing a metal rail from one of the cryo-chambers.

We should just scrap it and take our chances he declared, We should live and die as real human beings. He levelled his makeshift bat at the Transmat. Suddenly panicked, I leapt in front of the swinging rail and after taking the brunt of the blow on my ribs, I managed to wrestle the weapon from Frank, backing him into the nearest corner with several well-placed pokes from the bar.

"Are you crazy? *poke* The only thing that kept me from killing myself again *poke* was the chance of getting away from Earth s sterility, *poke* to start a new life *poke* on a new planet *poke* without any of those detestable things, *poke* but if you think I'm going to give up now and fulfil the plans of those impotent freaks back on earth, you're wrong, Frank."

I dropped the rail and cradling my broken ribs, I forced the dark Adonis flat against one of the walls.

"I've spent my whole life having my choices taken away from me. Don't you dare take this one. If that thing can get me to a earth-type planet, I'll use it. If that thing can fix my ovaries, I'll use it. I want to have a life, Frank. I want to have a baby. I want to be a mother. I want to grow old, and die. I want



to do something that feels right for a change. You just try to take this chance away from me and see what happens to you."

"I'll disembowel you like an animal and make sure you live long enough to enjoy every minute of it. How's that, you Epicurean bastard?"

I backed away slowly, and as the adrenaline faded from my system, I collapsed in a chair, moaning.

God, this is good, I thought, painful, but good. As I looked around, I saw that everyone but Alison was in shock from my tirade, and as Frank slid down the wall to land with a soft thump on the floor, Alison squawked in disbelief.

"We knew there was a chance that this was a deathship, but you didn't think any further than that. I can't believe you guys! I'm with Rachel. I want a kid."

She came over and knelt beside me, holding my hand as her smile faded into a look of awe.

"Yeah," she said. "I want a baby."

The other crew members began to shuffle and mutter. Dan turned back towards the console. "So who's a good astronomer?" he asked. "I need someone to help me to determine where the nearest Earth-type planet is located."

"That would be me," said Mandy. "Let's fire up the spectrometer."

It turned out that we were only eighteen light-years away from what promised to be a habitable planet in p-Cepheus, but it meant another fifty years of cryo. The majority of the group decided to take the chance of finding a new home, however, so we prepared the cryo-chambers for another extended sleep and even Frank pitched in, however reluctantly, to program our new flight-path into the computer.

But Frank's plan included me finding his body during the

last sleep-period before we went under. He had committed suicide rather ceremoniously after the rest of us were sleep. He left a note for us that said:

"Don't do me any favours."

We all knew what he meant, but I couldn't help feeling a little angry, a little cheated.

"Coward!" I accused when the others had gathered around. Mandy grabbed my arms and shook me.

"And how many times did you kill yourself?"

"That's not the point. I mean . . . I'm sorry. It's just . . ."

It was just that I finally knew how Gabe felt when he resurrected me all those times. Frank was an anchor, a reminder of the stable, unchanging world I had left, and I hadn't realized how attached to that world I was until Frank killed himself.

My hands began to shake as I considered what my dependence on the world of the Transmat had made me. I felt more wrong than ever, and I almost thought of following Frank.

Almost. I didn't have to say anything more to the others, though. I was sure they knew what I was feeling. Dan put his thick hands on my shoulders briefly, and then everyone left when I started to cry. We opted to freeze Frank's body and bury it in the old tradition when we made planetfall.

This awakening was worse than last time.

I felt like someone had mistaken my mouth for a toilet and two little Franks were hammering away at my skull with rails from the cryo-chamber. My ribs were stiff and it hurt just to breath. I'd have to stretch when I got up. I was shaking too, and I felt weak, as if this last sleep had somehow reversed the effects of the Transmat treatments I had taken all my life, but I looked at my hands. There were none of the age spots or leathery patches I'd been told were associated with old age, I just had to assume that my condition was a product of extended cryo-sleep, and not old age. I was shocked to find myself standing in front of the Transmat. I tried to make it look as though I was merely passing by the machine on my way to the computer console. No one else was looking though, they were all too busy with their own hangovers.

In fairly short order, we determined that we were indeed in orbit around the second planet in the p-Cepheus, and that we had only an hour or so before Frank's program would initiate the landing sequence.

I stood at the viewscreen trying to regain the mobility in my right side, and as I read the scanner reports on the atmosphere, I munched distractedly on an English muffin.

"Looks good!" I told the others. "There's a little more oxygen in the air than we re used to, but it's breathable."

"It's, um, about 1.2-times as large as the, um, Earth, so the gravity is a little stronger," added George from his station, "But it s mostly, um, silica and lighter elements, so compared to Earth, it's, um, geologically dead."

He couldn't hear me.
I guess that was good.
If we survived,
I wouldn't want to be
embarrassed.

"It'll be strange having no moon though," Mandy sighed.

I think the moon was her Frank. So I understood. To her credit, she accepted the hug graciously.

"I bet the ring looks beautiful at sunset," I said, as much to reassure myself as Mandy. "Come on, we've got a lot to do, and not long to do it."

As we prepared for planetfall, I thought, "We're really going to make it! Everything's going to be great!"

But before I even completed my thought, Dan cried,

"I should have foreseen this! We were suppose to rendezvous with a space station, so we're not equipped for planetfall!"

The rest of us stared at him in confusion.

"This ship doesn t have ceramic tiles, or the cooling system to handle re-entry. He explained. We'd better start working if we expect to get the job done before Frank s flight plan takes us into the atmosphere."

"Couldn't we just change the flight plan?" Alison asked.

"Not unless you have Frank's code, and that, I believe, the bastard took with him."

An hour later, re-entry started, and we were still frantically trying to produce ceramic tiles and transport them into the surface of the ship before the hull gave out. It was deadly hot as well, and we had no idea if we'd survive the brief trip through the atmosphere.

In moments, we could not speak without panting, could not see through the rivulets of sweat pouring into our eyes, could barely fight the inertia of re-entry to operate the Transmat. Daniel had already passed out in his chair.

Mandy, petite as she was, followed soon after, and the sound of George's tortuous wheezing informed me that he could do little to help.

"S-s-s-sramics done," Jame's slurred voice announced after another minute.

The heat was no longer as excruciating, but it was still too hot for us to survive. How could we cool the ship down? With the oppressive weight of the re-entry bearing down on me, how could I think?

"R-r-rleasin coolant . . . cryos."

I could barely hear Dan, but suddenly there was a rush of cooler air through our tiny craft. I only hoped that the ship wasn't too damaged to land. I started to see little red dots, then a larger black one coming toward me from some distance.

"Woulda chose you, y'know," I told Dan.

"What?"

"T have m kid with . . ."

"What?"

He couldn't hear me. I guess that was good. If we survived, I would't want to be embarrassed. The black dot got bigger and bigger, until it covered everything. Somewhere in the distance I heard Alison scream.

"Shut-up George, you re breathing's keeping me up!" I woke myself shouting at the poor man, and the strange thing was, when I came to, I couldn't hear a thing.

Is anyone else awake? I called. I didn't want to say alive. I didn't want to think about being the only survivor.

It was a credit to Frank's flight plan that anyone was alive at all. The ship had cracked like an egg, and I could see that it was either sunrise or sunset outside. I fumbled with my chair straps, trying to disentangle myself from them in the sudden urge to see the world we'd stumbled onto.

My hands were crusted in the blood of the hundred little wounds I had

received. I even had bruises.

"This is real," I thought as the pain of lifting myself from my chair hit me.

"Anyone awake?" I called again. Mandy moaned.

Thank God.

In the end, besides myself and Mandy, only Dan and Daniel had survived. It was't much of a gene pool, but I wasn't complaining.

The Transmat, devil that it was, had survived as well, and we condescended to use it one last time to heal ourselves and get our reproductive systems back on line. We decided not to resurrect anyone — out of principle — and when we were done, we destroyed the thing and buried it's remains with the bodies of our crewmates. I spent a long time at the grave before we filled it in wondering if my future would have been different if Alison had survived too, or if Frank hadn't killed himself.

"It was a shame you had to be such an asshole," I thought, but at least you had principles.

I could say nothing for Alison, though, and at last, I grabbed a soft woody stalk from a nearby plant and whittled away at it with a knife. I cut myself a few times. But in the end, I had a reasonable facsimile of a doll. I carved its name into it, and left Baby in Alison's arms before I called the others to help filling the hole.

It was dawn when I awoke, and now it was sunset. Mandy came to sit beside me carrying some plants she found that were edible. As I munched thoughtfully on the leaves, I gazed into the sky at the sparkling ring of silicate.

The delicate particles would reflect the sun's light well into the night. My visceral demon had finally left me, and I felt more fully alive than I ever had. Suicide was the farthest thing from my thoughts, and I wondered, briefly, whether Gabe could have appreciated a place like this. I smiled. Probably not.

Beside me, Mandy swallowed a mouthful of greens.

"You know," she said, you were right. She gestured at the shining bow in the sky above us.

"It is beautiful."

Continued from page 25

TARK

like one of his fellow cadets from the academy, but he couldn't quite place it.

But then Tark didn't care. He opened fire. His Blastur charge screamed toward his opponent ending in a blinding flash.

As Tark's eyes adjusted, he stared unbelievingly. The intruder was still there and . . . laughing.

"We told you we were working on deflecting laser blasts. No one uses those old-style missiles any more. Surely you can do better than that," said the intruder.

Cocky bastard, thought Tark, sound like myself when I was in the academy arena.

Never one to an avenue of attack after one try, Tark sent another charge on its way but this time at the intruders legs. The blast erupted into the earth and sent the intruder off-balance. This time Tark stared off to one side to ensure he was not blinded. While staring up to the sky he realized the entire area was surrounded with cameras

By Calev, S.E. even has surveillance in here!

The intruder was back on its feet and heading toward Tark as quickly as Tark was heading to it.

"That was better. We knew from last time we had picked right with you."

What's with this "we" stuff. This intruder was obviously involved with his initial attack eight months ago but must have though Tark and his opponents had had a chance to exchange some kind of repartee.

The intruder flipped up its own Blastur, identical to Tark's and let a blast go. Tark dove to one side and the blast went into the crates behind him.

After dodging the blast Tark, returned on course heading straight to his opponent he appeared happy to continue directly at Tark. Just before the imminent collision Tark leaped as high as he could sailing over the surprised intruder. Landing, Tark spun and let another blast go at short range at the intruder.

The light this time was more than blinding. Tark felt his feet lift off the ground as the backlash of hitting whatever shield the intruder had sent him to the edge of the opening.

Once again Tark had to let his eyes adjust to the twilight and saw his opponent climbing out of pile of the crates's contents

Tark finally got see what he and others had been guarding for years.

Rocks. Rocks were scattered everywhere and the intruder was getting up out of a pile of them, still laughing as he dusted himself off.

"Excellent, we will have to work on ways to keep our feet under us Tark but you still haven harmed me . . .and you can't."

"Cut with the we shit. I didn't talk to you buddies last time and I not interested in talking to you."

The intruder started to walk toward Tark.

"But you have talked with me Tark. You have talked to me every day for the past eight months."

"What are talking about," asked Tark, although he was beginning to think he already knew and began to back toward one of the aisle openings.

"Don't bother trying to escape. I am everything you know and feel. S.E. has been feeding your brain wave into me ever since you got to Poris. Every time you played a combat simulation exercise, every time you read a book every time you went to the can, I learned. I learned everything you know . . .everything I need to know"

"What kind of bullshit, is this," Tark let his hand slide down to his Graton-laser shiv as the intruder got closer and closer.

"That's why we loved finding you, Tark, no real family, caring for nothing except you own gain. Even if it meant the prospect of solitary on Poris for three years for a guaranteed high paying job at the end of it. Oh we looooved finding you. . ."

Tark stepped back into the darkness and stopped back into another opening crossing across the aisle he had been in.

"Don't bother trying to escape, Tark I told you I know everything."

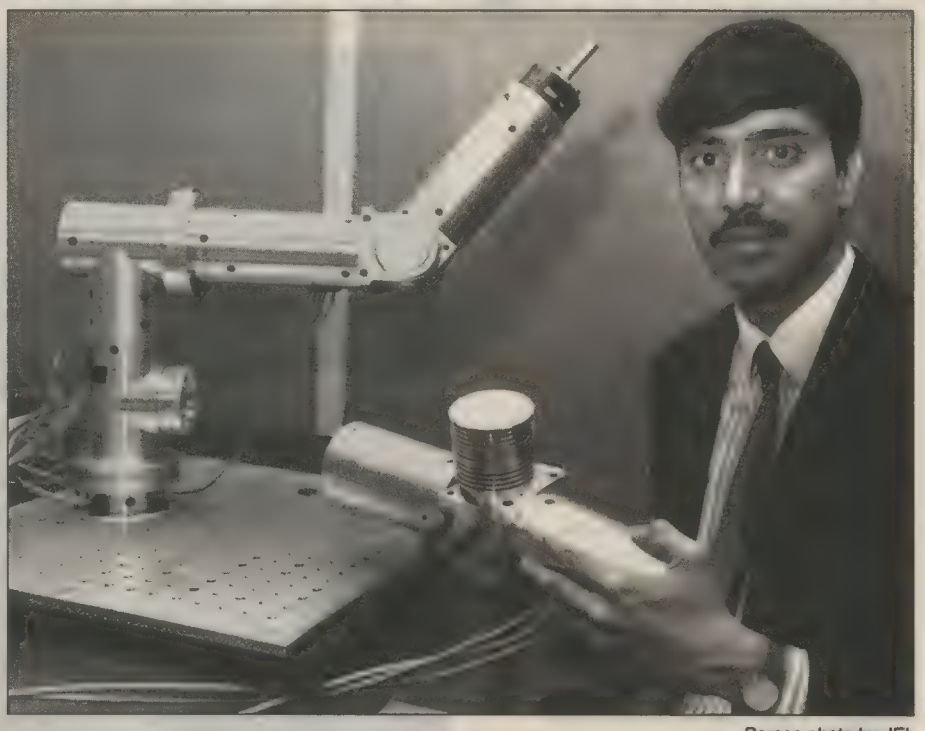
As the intruder stepped into the aisle, Tark grabbed his shiv thrust across the intruders facemask. The Graton-laser seared through the magnetic shield and the faces masker sliced off cleanly. Tark stared at . . . his own face.

"Thank you Tark," laughed the clone. "We'll program in the defence for that one."

Prototype Tark VII opened fire at point blank range while the cameras continued to record.

Robot system developed for clinical testing

By
CHRIS KREJLGAARD



Parsec photo by JEL

Ananth Seshan, vice-president of Engineering Services in Toronto, explains that the company's new robotic system is akin to constructing a robot with Lego.

Rather wait for needed private-sector funding for one home-based project, Toronto's Engineering Services Inc. has taken the technology and developed a clinical application for it.

Company vice-president Ananth Seshan says the same robotic technology that would have made it easier to film computer-generated animation in homes is being adapted to evaluate body fluid samples.

In its original incarnation, the robotic system would have been used to operate a camera so that video game users would be able to take part in the action.

With current technology, a second person is required to operate the camera and even the steadiest of arms still cannot eliminate camera wobble.

But the same characteristic that makes robots the perfect camera operators also help make them perfect for some laboratory work.

To ensure accuracy, such body fluid samples must be kept and handled in a sterile environment. But because of the wide range of tasks that must be performed, it is a labor-intensive, slow and costly task.

To use standard robots would be expensive because attachments must be purchased and adapted to fit the variety of tasks.

"There is a need for this system in clinical applications," explains Seshan.

"Robots are suited to work in a sterile environment and can easily handle the enormous number and volume of samples that have to be processed."

The Engineering Services robotic system can be designed for a specific workplace and task. Seshan says that the move is similar to building a robot with Lego — the necessary joints and attachments needed for evaluating the samples would be purchased at the same time as the original system. Then, rather than purchase new attachments, the joints are reconfigured to perform a new or different task. In addition, the system utilizes normal personal computers, a fact that Seshan says makes the system cost-effective.

"The problem with standard robots is that they are bought off the shelf," says Seshan. "A company buys a robot and then adds the system to a group. Each robot has a specific application, so it can be a costly endeavor to automate some operations."

Since the Engineering Services system can be pieced together like a Lego system, companies only have to purchase the joints and applications that they require, which means that money isn't wasted purchasing a line of robots. In addition, the components for the system can be packed in a brief case. So storage requirements are kept to a minimum.

Field tests for the system have been scheduled for this summer.

Located in modest offices on the University of Toronto campus, the company takes prototypes and prepares them for the marketplace. Once the system has passed the testing phase, another company manufactures and markets it.

The Toronto company is also developing a number of other robotic applications.

Also being tested this summer is a type of robotic bomb squad.

With current robotic devices that are used to disarm bombs, authorities have to deal with a number of cables needed to guide the robot around obstacles and to the bomb. The problem is that sometimes the cables become entangled in furniture

Continued on page 41

Internet legend blasts network's hype

By
CHRIS KREJLGAARD

Clifford Stoll is afraid.

However, it is not some fearsome monster that concerns him, but rather the formidable juggernaut known as The Internet.

It is the same type of fear that horse owners likely felt when the first viewed an automobile or when a farmer witnessed his neighbour's home being razed for the construction of a new *highway*. Like the construction of those highways earlier this century, the information highway, Stoll says, has a potential to have just as devastating an effect on society.

"The social and cultural diversity of the world is threatened," Stoll says while relaxing in his Toronto hotel room. "Because of highways, every town and village that was connected to it was turned into a strip mall.

"The same thing is happening because of The Internet."

Lest you think that Stoll is some anti-technology worrywart, think again.

The Berkeley astronomer is something of a legend on The Internet. In the mid-1980s he noticed something was wrong with an accounting program he was operating on one of his computers. Nothing major mind you, just something to pique his interest.

He searched for the problem and discovered that someone was accessing his computer from The Net. During the course of several months he tracked the culprits through various networks in the United States until finally to West Germany. The hackers had been using The Internet to crack into U.S. military computers, steal secrets and then sell them to officials in the then-Soviet Union.

Photo by Maggie Hallahan

University of California astronomer Clifford Stoll hopes that his latest book Silicon Snake Oil will give Internet enthusiasts cause to hesitate and ponder how the rise of computers and computer networks have affected their lives.

That is perhaps why there has been such an outrage among computer users to Stoll's book and his criticism. He is one of them, and now he has questioned the lemming-like approach some quarters have taken to being on The Net.

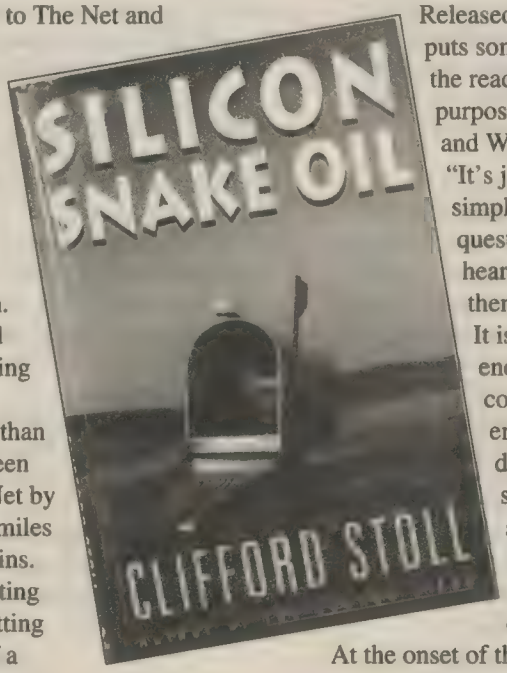
In the time since Stoll's book hit the market last spring, his computers have been bombed by other network users in scenes involving the small-minded and

hate-filled users depicted in his book.

"People think I'm letting them down," he sighs. "They want to join The Internet and here I am criticizing it."

But it is not such users that concerns Stoll, it is the isolating effect that The Internet and the rise of the personal computer has had on society.

Where people went out into their neighbourhood or into th community, now they log on to The Net and converse via keyboard. Rather than see some friendly face, the person merely stares into the cold glow of a computer screen.



"They should be out appreciating what's in their backyard rather than seeing what's been posted on The Net by someone 1,000 miles away," he explains. "People are wasting valuable time sitting alone in front of a computer monitor."

Until recently, Stoll counted himself among the ranks of the monitor watchers.

After fifteen years cruising various computer networks, he decided that he wanted to join the human race.

During a holiday with some friends at a Connecticut farmhouse, Stoll realized that he had been captured by The Internet.

"While they were outside enjoying themselves, I was in a dark den logged on to The Net," he explains. "Then I smelled popcorn coming from the kitchen.

"So I turned off the computer and went outside."

And turning into a rest stop on the information highway is at the heart of his latest book, Silicon Snake Oil, Second Thoughts on the Information Highway.

Released last spring, the book puts some basic questions to the reader — What is the purpose of The Internet? and What is it delivering? "It's just time to ask some simple and obvious questions. And I don't hear anyone asking them."

It is a move he now encourages other computer users to emulate. And it is a dramatic shift in sentiment for someone who was one of the first proponents of the computer network.

At the onset of the book, Stoll relates an incident from his graduate school days in the southwest United States.

One day, he was among a group of friends who decided to explore caves in the desert outside of town. So armed with flashlights and some string, the group descended into the cave and crawled through a series of tunnels until the reached and underground lake.

Only the leader of the group was familiar enough with the caves to act as a guide. The rest of the group followed him through the muck and darkness and some were disappointed when they reached their goal.

It is an image that Stoll holds as an example of people using The Internet.

These users are left with little direction and are groping in the dark for the information that they seek.

The network was intended to provide academics and students with a place for them to easily locate and retrieve needed information for their research projects. But now while the system still provides users with information, the bulk of the material is "trite, trivial and nonsensical.

"The bulk of it is unimportant. The World Wide Web has zero information value."

The lack of any filters has meant that there is a glut of information on The Net and finding specific information is difficult for the average user.

Stoll notes that unlike newspapers, magazines and other publications, it is easy to have articles or stories published on computer networks, so "The Internet attracts the dregs, stuff that isn't good enough to get into print.

"The high quality material goes to paper."

So if the bulk of the information is merely a waste of time, what is the attraction of The Internet?

According to Stoll, users are by and large lured by the hype surrounding the network.

"I keep hearing, day-in and day-out, the thick hyperbole surrounding The Internet. Users are being promised something that The Internet could never deliver."

Continued on page 41

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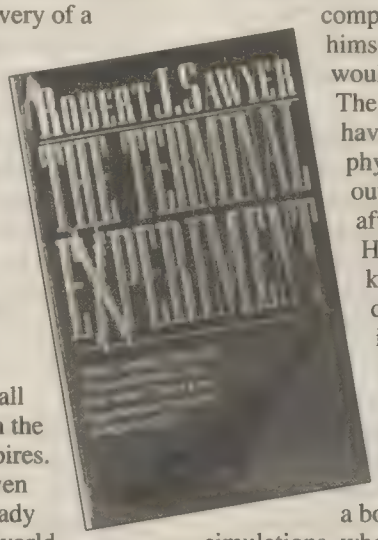
SEE PAGE 47 FOR DETAILS

Soulwave ignites controversy in Terminal Experiment

It isn't often subplots turn out to be more interesting then the main story but that was certainly the case in The Terminal Experiment (HarperPrism) by Canadian author Robert J. Sawyer.

Abortion, reincarnation, life after death, animal rights, and the definition of a soul are highly controversial topics even today, but the discovery of a "soulwave" by medical scientist Peter Hobson brings all those issues back to the forefront in this novel based in our not-so-distant future.



Hobson was trying to determine the exact moment of death in his experiments and instead discovered through an extremely precise encephalogram that a small light of energy exits from the brain just as the body expires.

This rockets him to even greater fame than he already enjoyed but also put the world in an uproar as the aforementioned topics were given crucial information to use in debates, both pro and con.

When does the soulwave begin to exist?

Would abortion before the appearance of a soulwave be legal but illegal afterwards?

Do chimpanzees and dolphins have soulwaves?

Do they then deserve more humane treatment?

Do hospitals terminate life-support so the soulwave can make its way to its destination (either heaven or elsewhere) or do they try and keep the soulwave in its human vessel?

Can serial rapists claim out-of-body experiences left them with no soul and therefore not responsible for their acts?

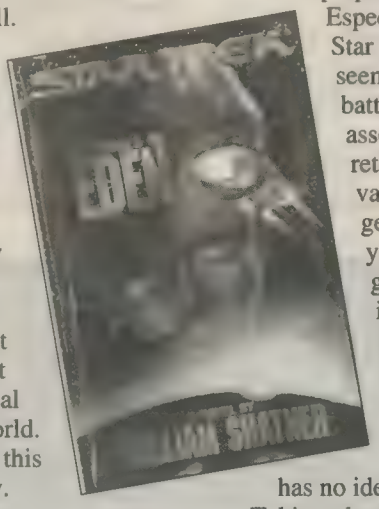
All these topics are enough for several books but the effect of the soulwave on this future Earth is just a subplot in The Terminal Experiment, which is basically a computer whodunit.

Sawyer's world has already discovered the secret of immortality which brings about another tough question — should humans opt for eternal life or should they die and let themselves travel on to wherever the soulwave takes them?

Hobson decides to create three computer simulations of himself to determine which would be the best future. The first Hobson would have all memory of its physical existence edited out. It would simulate life after death. The second Hobson would be without knowledge of aging or death. It would simulate immortality. The third Hobson would be unmodified — a control.

Living inside the computer proved to be a bore for the computer simulations, who soon found their way out to the Super Internet.

The information highway is a huge playground where the computer simulations have plenty to do. One even finds out how he can kill.



It is up to Hobson to determine who is responsible for the murders without destroying his own life and protecting those close to him.

As a murder mystery it is fast-moving, but relatively easy to solve.

The book is excellent and Sawyer does a great job incorporating our real world into his future world. Something which helps this reader stick with a story.

The character of Peter Hobson lives in Toronto, but was born in Ottawa. The talk show hosts are still on and have a field day with the soulwave, including Phil Donahue who apparently opted for immortality treatment.

All of the above made the Terminal Experiment an enjoyable read. In fact, it was hard to put the book down. Several chapters end with Internet News items which include protests, debates and experiments set off by the introduction of the soulwave.

Although they did not further the main plot they made the book more interesting then it already was.

Sawyer put us in a futuristic world which seemed quite plausible within the next few decades.

He didn't have superbeings or aliens but simply a world which was slightly more advanced than the one we are living in.

Mystery readers or lovers of any good book would get a kick out of the Terminal Experiment, not just sci-fi fans.

— BRIAN BELFRY

❑❑❑

It is getting just a trifle monotonous.

Ever since Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan, James T. Kirk seems to be in a perpetual midlife crisis.

Especially when it comes to Star Trek books. It always seems that the good captain is battling the inner demons associated with growing old, retiring and losing his vaunted sex appeal. It's getting to the point when you wish he'd just find a good psychiatrist and get it over with.

In Ashes of Eden (Pocket Books), Kirk is having a personal crisis.

His Starfleet career is winding down and he has no idea where his future lies.

Taking place in the period prior to his death in Star Trek: Generations, Kirk is unnerved by the fact that the Enterprise B is about to be launched and he is not

going to be the captain. Someone else will hold the reins of the Enterprise. Kirk's Enterprise is scheduled to become a target in weapons tests — a decision that was made made by a Starfleet officer with a longstanding feud with Kirk.

Add to that the fact that Kirk is uninspired by his teaching and committee work at Starfleet and he is in one heck of a crisis.

Enter a mysterious woman who has need of Kirk and his many talents and can offer him a lover, a mission and a starship to command — the Enterprise-A.

But to take her up on her offer, Kirk must resign from Starfleet, turn his back on his friends and battle a number of people who are after the secret that Kirk is sworn to guard.

The tiresome personal crisis that is plaguing Kirk aside, William Shatner does provide readers with a laudable tale.

Shatner (who knows the main character better than anyone) and collaborators Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens, managed to effectively build on the bureaucratic intrigue that was presented in Star Trek VI: The Forgotten Country.

They build on the premise that the anti-Klingon conspiracy ran much deeper than Admiral Cartwright and his handful of officers.

And it is solid foundation for the book and the trio create a credible air of paranoia surround Kirk and his friends.

The subplot involving Chekov and Uhura, as well as the ensuing conflict with Sulu augments the story perfectly.

Interestingly, the reader is left with the distinct impression that this is Shatner's attempt at reconciliation with his former colleagues after their well-publicized disputes.

There are passages, particularly those involving Kirk and Scotty, where there is an underlying feeling that Shatner wished that it was him and James Doohan sitting in the Klingon bar or standing in the Enterprise's corridor.

And such a feeling would not be out of place in this book, after all, reconciliation is the prevailing theme. This tone and the subplots all help the book overcome its focus on Kirk's now stereotypical personal crisis.

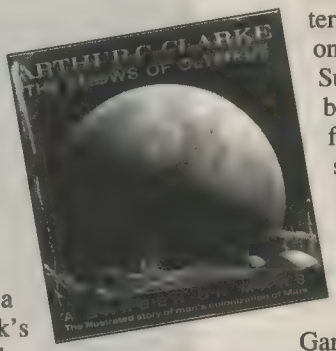
— Chris Krejlgaard

❑❑❑

In the Star Trek universe there are rooms known as holosuites — a chamber where a computer generates any type of scenario that an individual desires.

In Warped, the latest in the Star Trek Deep Space Nine series, someone has augmented the space station's holosuites so that they provide the occupant with his or her most secret desire. Unfortunately, in the process, the person becomes murderously insane.

After a spate of killings on the station, Commander Sisko and his crew quickly discover that a new member of the Bajoran government has surreptitiously installed banned technology into the inner workings of a number of holosuites. And that the banned technology is the reason for the murder spree.



However, in the course of the novel, the commander discovers that the person has more in mind than simply creating an army of indiscriminate killers.

The person behind the plot, McHogue — a former cohort of Quark's —has somewhat grander plans for the holosuites and the Las Vegas-style city that is constructed on Bajor for a multitude of such holo-suites.

The title Warped is appropriate on a number of levels: the people who use the holosuites are warped through prolonged exposure to the banned technology, the Bajoran people are warped by the promise of economic independence from the rest of the Federation, relationships are warped between Sisko and his son, Jake, and space and time are warped by the prolonged use of the technology.

But most of all, the title can refer to the story itself.

Although the plot has promise, it falls flat quickly and hard.

Written by K.W. Jeter, who has more than 20 novels to his credit — including an earlier work in the Deep Space 9 series, the story just doesn't have the feel of a Star Trek novel.

The reader quickly gets the distinct impression that the author doesn't quite have a handle on his characters — a fatal flaw when you're dealing with material as well known as Star Trek.

In Warped, Jeter attempts to present a psychological study into the darker side of man's desires. But it comes up woefully short.

For example, the holosuite takes Major Kira back to a time when she was in a Cardassian camp. Kira's secret desire — although not a surprising one — is that she wanted to kill Cardassians and saw herself as an avenging angel for her people. However, it is an aspect that Jeter fails to explore to any depth — a major oversight for any novel that purports to be a psychological study. And, unfortunately, it is an all-too prevalent flaw in the novel.

— CK

❑❑❑

For centuries, Mars has captured man's imagination. Especially in terms of what life can be found on the planet.

Such subject matter has always been a subject ripe for science fiction writers. But recent scientific discoveries have held out little possibility of life existing on the planet.

That is why Arthur C. Clarke's latest book, The Snows of Olympus: A Garden on Mars (McClelland & Stewart), is such a fascinating book.

In the book, Clarke uses a computer program called Vistapro to outline the

Continued on page 42

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Metropolis

Dark, forbidding tale that may have come to pass

By
CHRIS KREJLGAARD

For many people, the only exposure to Fritz Lang's Metropolis has been through music videos.

Which means that the music and its lyrics overwhelmed the subtleties and message of the movie.

Such a circumstance is a pity.

Metropolis is a disturbing vision of the world's future. Breathtaking in its grandeur and its use of special effects, but disturbing nonetheless.

Set around the year 2000, Metropolis depicts the world as an industrialized mess.

Workers are thought of as little more than disposable slugs and industrialists have gained near god-like stature. And in such a world of efficiency, and hence profit, is the only virtue worth pursuing.

Leading industrialist John Fredersen is not content with the level of efficiency achieved at his plants — he wants the workers' spirits broken so that they can work longer hours.

Already the workers are little more than zombies, whose lives revolve around their work schedule. In fact, time has been perverted so that days are now twenty hours in order to accommodate two ten-hour shifts.

Photo courtesy of Aikman Archive

The evil scientist, Rothwang, presents his greatest creation — a robot that will fool the workers into rebelling against their masters, the leaders of industry. Metropolis is filled with stark contrasts between workers and their masters and warns against the folly of blind loyalty to ideas or images — a message pre-Nazi Germany would have done well to heed.

Standing between Fredersen and his perfect industrial society is Maria.

Maria has been secretly counselling the workers to be patient and await the coming of the mediator who will help them overcome the hardships they endure at the hands of Fredersen.

Fredersen enlists the aid of Rothwang who creates a robot and then bestows it with the image of Maria. The plan calls for the robot to incite the workers to turn to violence so that Fredersen will have an excuse to respond in kind.

While Maria is held prisoner, the robot takes her place among the workers and convinces them that only their rebellion will change matters.

"Destroy all machines," the robot implores the workers.

It is a message that, much to the chagrin of the robot's creators, the mob takes to heart.

The mob makes its way to the central power plant and destroys it, despite pleas that the move will result in their homes being flooded and the deaths of their friends and family members in the workers' city.

The workers' city does, indeed, become flooded. Only through the efforts of the now-escaped Maria, Fredersen's son

Rothwang busies himself in drawing the essence of Maria into his robot, above, as part of a grand scheme to trick workers into rioting.

and a dismissed Fredersen employee, are the workers' children saved from doom.

When the mob finally realizes what it has done, it turns on the false Maria and destroys the robot. Rothwang is killed during a battle with Fredersen's son. Fredersen repents and seeks salvation for his past deeds and Fredersen's son turns out to be the long-awaited mediator who brings workers and management together.

Metropolis contains a wealth of images, metaphors and allegories.

A heroine named Maria is no accident.

She serves as a saint and symbol of hope for the destitute workers. She is the one who helps lead the children from the flood waters.

It is her image — a false one at that — that the workers follow without question.

In fact, the workers follow many people and images during the course of the movie. Lang presents these workers without a shred of individuality or of any sort of responsibility for their actions.

They are quick to blame everyone but themselves for these actions. They blame Fredersen (who is far from an angel anyway) for their plight and they blame the robot Maria for the supposed death of their children — even though they had been warned of the consequences of destroying the power station.

Such a damning portrait is not surprising given that the movie was filmed in 1926 in Germany.

At the time the country was being pounded economically by the victorious countries in World War I.

Lang wanted to demonstrate the folly of blind loyalty to any person, thing or philosophy. It is a lesson that Germany had not learned at the time.

For obvious reasons, the future portrayed in the movie is a dark, foreboding place. After all, with the present being in such a depressing state, there was little hope that the future was going to be any better.

And like other science fiction works, some of what Lang brought to the screen 69 years ago has come to pass — especially with the rise and dependence upon technology.

In a movie as visually stunning as Metropolis, it is the images involving the robot Maria that carry the most significance in the movie.

In Rothwang's hidden laboratory, some of Maria's essence must be siphoned off in order for the robot to take form and gain some semblance of life.

In its first test, the robot Maria is unveiled before a wealthy crowd.

The robot arises through the stage supported by young muscular workers. By the time she finishes a seductive dance for the benefit of the audience, the young bodies have been transformed into decaying forms.

Like any great movie, new aspects and ideas arise out of subsequent viewings — as long as some rock group isn't overpowering the message.

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Is there life out there?

What exactly do numbers say?

Let us start with an analogy.

Assume that you are standing in front of a long line of firecrackers and that you are able to light one fuse each second.

A fuse lasts only 10 seconds before the firecracker blows up.

By
PAUL-EMILE LEGAULT

Based on the numbers alone, there must be some form of life elsewhere in the galaxy. But where are these lifeforms and is it intelligent? More importantly, efforts must be made to contact them.

Once you have started to light the fuses, how many fuses are lit at any one time?

By the time you light the eleventh one, the first one blows up, then the twelfth is lit and the second one blows up.

At any one time, you will only have two burning fuses. The number of lit fuses depends on the rate of lighting and how long the fuse lasts.

Similarly, the number of extraterrestrial civilizations (N), at any one time, is equal to the rate of formation (R) multiplied by life time (T) of the civilization.

Galaxies contain anywhere from 100 to 400 billion stars.

Our galaxy, the Milky Way, has about 200 billion stars. These stars were formed in the last 10 billion years, since the beginning of our galaxy.

The rate of formation (S) is 20 per year (minimum = 10, maximum = 40).

Of these twenty, only eight per cent have an acceptable ecosphere (E) with liquid water and ones that last long enough for carbon-based life to evolve.

Hot stars have wide ecospheres, but they do not live long enough for life to evolve on their planets.

The ecosphere of a cool star is very small and the chances of finding a planet there are almost nil. Stars like our sun are the best candidates.

Stars can't have a suitable ecosphere, but how many planets (P) will eventually form within this region?

In our solar system, there is one planet with the ecosphere and Mars is on the far edge. We can expect two planets around each remaining stars (minimum = 1, maximum = 4).

Continued on page 42

Continued from page 33
TECHNOLOGY

or **become** snagged.

"It will have a freer motion in a cluttered environment," he says. "The wires have to be retrieved and it's not possible with a conventional system."

The system developed by the Toronto firm features a laser-guidance system that eliminates such problems and allows police to get the robot closer to the suspected bomb. Not that the unit really needs to get closer, Seshan notes that the unit also features a accurate and powerful water cannon which is used to soak a bomb's battery and render it useless.

Already law enforecement officials in Canada and the United States are awaiting the results of this summer's tests.

Continued from page 35
AUTHORS

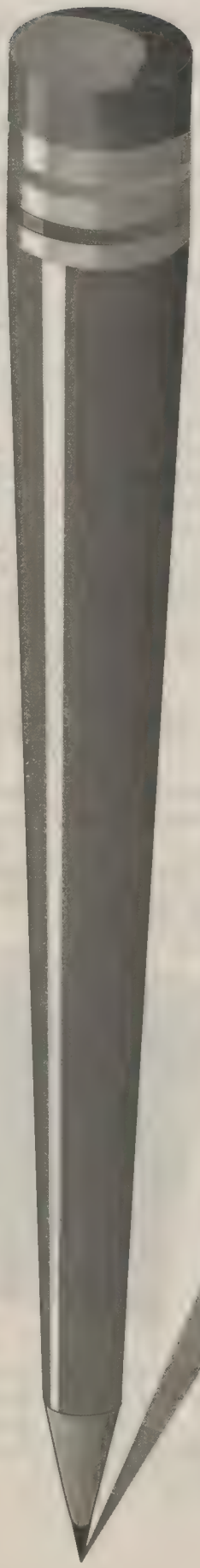
Among these promises is a society where books, magazines and newspapers have been replaced by computers and where information flows fast and free.

None of this according to Stoll, will happen.

With on-line fees and assorted other costs, it can hardly be considered free and who would like to curl up with a good computer screen?

Despite his concerns over the hype of The Internet, Stoll does believe that there will come a time when people realize that giant computer networks are not the godsend that they were led to believe.

"It will be driven by economics. The change will come in the next five years when people get an e-mail address and discover there is nothing useful for them on the network."



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Parsec is looking for writers to provide fiction and non-fiction stories for future issues. Writer's guidelines are available by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to The editor: Parsec, Unit G Suite 108, 1942 Regent St., Sudbury, Ontario, P3E 3Z9.

If you already have a story idea send us a proposal detailing the subject of either the story or interview.

Continued from page 40
PONDERING

Will life (L) evolve on all these planets?

In our system were sure of life on one and no concrete results yet for Mars. Chances are fifty per cent (minimum = 10 per cent, maximum= 100 per cent).

Will this life form be intelligent?

On the only planet with life, that we know of, life developed an intelligence; therefore the probability is 100 per cent (the range is 10 per cent to 100 per cent).

The rate at which intelligent civilizations form (R) each year is equal to:

R = S*E*P*L*I = 20*0.08*2*0.5*1 = 1.6

How long does a civilization last (T)?

Values range from 1,000 years, shorter than some civilizations on this planet to 10 billion years, the life time of a sun-like star.

Frank Drake who formulated this equation uses a value of 12,000 years.

The number of civilizations in existence now is, according to my calculations:

N = R*T = 1.6 * 12,000 = 19,600

The value can range from a low value of eight to a high value of 12.8 billion.

In conclusion, extraterrestrials should exist.

These extraterrestrials would be carbon-based, like us, but the odds that evolution repeats itself in the exact same way on an other planet is nearly zero.

They would, then look nothing like us.

Despite my belief in extraterrestrials, I do not believe they ever visited our planet.

It is now our responsibility to try and establish communications with our cosmic cousins.

> "Stars can't have a suitable ecosphere, but how many planets will eventually form within this region?"

If you have a topic that you would like to be pondered, we would like to hear from you. Simply jot down the question or subject and send it to Pondering c/o Parsec, Unit G, Suite 108, 1942 Regent St. Sudbury, Ont., P3E 3Z9.

***PAUL-EMILE LEGAULT** is director of the Doran Planetarium at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario.*

Readers have to struggle through Warp Angel

Continued from page 37
BOOK REVIEWS

process of making Mars habitable.

The book is lavishly illustrated with photographs and maps from early examinations of the planet, computer-enhanced images from exploration spacecraft and paintings of life on the planet.

Besides postulating the way life could be brought to the currently dead world, Clarke describes how journeys to our nearest neighbour may be made and what life on an inhabited Mars may be like.

Like the rest of Clarke's books, The Snows of Olympus is intended to stir thought and debate, and it does not fail in its task.

— Lars Johanson

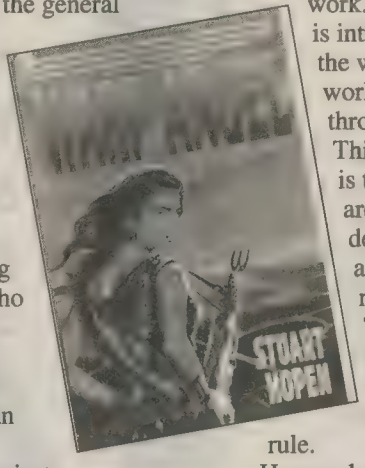
The back cover of Stuart Hopen's Warp Angel (Tor) should be taken as a warning rather than as an endorsement to read the book.

"Stuart Hopen's Warp Angel is perhaps the strangest science fiction novel I've ever read. . ., " says author Lawrence Watt-Evans.

While Watt-Evans added that the book is "wonderously strange," strange would suffice.

Warp Angel is a slow laborious read.

The Draconian System is an anarchic society where only the rich and the ingenious survive. For the general population there is a distinct fear that they can become slaves for any of the various rich patrons at any time.



The plot revolves around Magen, a former assassin who is given the task of killing Adam Hirsch a man who has been gaining a following among the populace of one of the worlds in the Draconian System.

Deciding that the easiest, and safest way for her to accomplish her goal is to poison Hirsch. During the attempt she meets Hirsch's cook, Papa Russia and begins her reindoctrination into the Jewish faith. When she finally meets Hirsch face to face, the transformation is complete. She renounces her career and they marry.

But Hirsch is captured by the slaver bods and Magen must return to her old ways to rescue him.

Warp Angel is a convoluted work. While the core of the plot is intriguing, much of it is lost in the work. The reader must truly work at the book in order to get through it.

This is not to say that the book is totally without merit. There are passages that could spark debates about religion — or at least the need for people not to judge other beliefs. There are intricately-detailed battles and vivid scenes, but they are the exception rather than the rule.

Hopen also demonstrates an ignorance of language. He interjects modern colloquialisms and rather than enhance the work, they merely detract from its tone and ultimately damage it.

— LJ

By
GREG VAILLANCOURT

Fishing is a sport for those with plenty of patience and a consuming desire to catch The Big One.

I've tried it a few times on Manitoulin Island, I remember the trips along the ice with frozen feet in the winter.

And there was the boat trip in the summer when first the engine wouldn't start so we had to paddle and on the way back the engine got stuck on full throttle.

I was sure we'd be riding on dry land without a vehicle.

Oh yes, and once I managed to flog my aunt, the best fisherperson of the group, with a fine juicy fat worm.

I know what you're thinking. This guy is a real loser when it comes to fishing!

Truth is I'm always looking to improve.

Call it P.D.

So when I came upon a fishing game I thought what better way to learn what it takes to catch The Big One. The game I spotted, like the shadow of a three-pound largemouth bass passing under the boat, was Gone Fishin' by Amtex of Belleville, Ont.

The game requires an IBM or compatible computer with a 386DX 33 MHZ or higher and a CD-Rom drive.

It also requires a minimum of four megabytes of RAM and four megabytes of space on your hard drive.

I thought it would cover the basics like learning how to cast, but it is much more than that.

This is a game that the most experienced angler can learn from. Gone Fishin' goes beyond casting and gives you many features so close to reality you'll want to put on your lure hat before you begin.

This game is an original in every way.

Gone fishin' has everything from depth charts to a bait shop and finally to a wizened old fisherman who's ready to share his wisdom with you.

It is the first fishing game.

It comes in a tackle box-type package, including a manual that covers the techniques of fishing and the habits of the fish as well as their world record sizes.

Just in case you happen to catch one worth talking about, you can call Amtex's bulletin board and discuss your catch with the other anglers on-line.

Included is a little catalogue for some of the lures that gives you hints on what fish like.

Presented in a purely commercial way, it includes a fully-detailed map of the Bay of Quinte on the shore of Lake Ontario — a very hot walleye area.

A legend discusses what fish are where and when. It points out fishing hot spots and population hot spots around the lake including what features each lodge or motel has.

Without further ado lets be gone fishin.'

As the game begins you get a great visual of a guy in a boat

WELL

What do you think so far?

Remember, this magazine is for you, the readers, so tell us what you think!

PARSEC

TURN TO PAGE 48 FOR YOUR INPUT

casting out with the lure hitting the water.

A bass flies out of the water to secure it. On comes the theme song from the Andy Griffith Show.

I actually had a vision of one of the scenes from the movie On Golden Pond where the grandfather and the boy are casting for the big fish of the lake.

Now you have a choice of beginning a day on the lake, or entering a fishing derby (a feature to be added in an add-on module).

So we'll begin a new day.

You decide the day and time you would like to fish and what weather conditions are present.

Did you know each fish behaves differently in different weather conditions and time of day and fish have different times of the year where they are in different locations?

Lastly, you must decide the difficulty and the luck of your fisherman (I always told my aunt she caught the most perch because she was the luckiest).

At this point you will be at the town road with a view of the lodge, the lake and the bait shop (the weather conditions and time reflect your choice made previously).

It's a great shot — it reminded me of the dock in Kagawong on Manitoulin Island.

When you enter the lodge you will be presented with a crackling fire and a wise old fisherman and his dog relaxing. Behind the fireplace are many of the prize catches for each of the fish of the lake — walleye, pike, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass and perch among others — and the top five catches of the respective fish.

If you do well enough your name and fish as well as its size may appear here someday. Other prizes include trophies for the greatest weight caught on a day, the most points for the larger fish caught and a silver boot given to the individual with the most boots caught in one day.

This wise old fisherman is full of information.

He can tell you old fish stories which will give you hints to fishing hot spots, lures to try and other things you will not find in the manual or map.

On your way out you will want to pick up the paper to read about the latest fish story (another source of hints and a few laughs on occasion).

Leaving the lodge, you will want to head to the bait shop. And of course, its the typical small "one-stop shopping" type.

There's a guy behind a cash register on top of a display case containing lures.

For those pesky flying things there are cans of bug spray.

Other items like fishing poles add to the reality. While here you can purchase lures. There are many, many lures and they all have different attributes and effects as well as clues as to fish they are suited to.

Exiting the bait shop with the appropriate lures and bug spray you are now ready to head out on the lake.

You decide where you want to fish and motor out to the location. Now the fishing aspect of the game kicks in with amazing reality.

You pull your rod back over your head and send it out in front of you with the line flying.

As you begin reeling in you can hear the occasional dog bark. An unrealistic point in the game is the dog can be heard barking from the middle of the lake as well as at spots near land — this is one loud dog!

You hear, see and feel a pull on the line, you snap the rod straight back hoping to get the fish hooked.

He's on!

You increase your drag on the line as the fish is pulling your line out. You now have control and begin reeling in vigorously.

You've got him!

This is just a brief description of one of the many battles with fish you will have in the game. Other things to be aware of when reeling in are that some fish need to tire before they can be reeled in successfully.

Sometimes that really big catch on the line that gives no resistance may be a boot or similar garbage.

Your line may snag the bottom and if you can't get it free you'll have to cut it and lose your lure.

The attention to detail is awesome, the graphics are stunning and the objectives of the game are well-defined and addictive.

I'm still not 'hooked' on the real thing but this game was great entertainment.

Good luck on the lake and may THE BIG ONE jump right in your boat!

GREG VAILLANCOURT *is computer aficionado living in Garson, Ontario. His column appears in each issue of Parsec.*

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BE A SUCCESSFUL WRITER . . . and write for money and please while learning how. You get individual tuition from professional writers on all aspects of writing —romances, short stories, radio and TV scripts, articles and children's stories. Write, call or fax today for our FREE BOOK, "How to be a successful writer." TOLL FREE 1-800-267-1829. FAX 1-619-749-9551. **The Writing School, 38 McArthur Avenue, Suite 2354, Ottawa, Ont., K1L 6R2.**

WRITER NEEDED: We are looking for a knowledgeable writer to provide bi-monthly columns on anime and gaming. Rate dependent upon experience. Apply in writing, with samples, to managing editor c/o Parsec.

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Personals

SINGLE SCIENCE/NATURE ENTHUSIASTS are meeting through Science Connection. Contact us for information: Box 389, Port Dover, Ont. N0A 1N0; 1-800-667-5179.

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National advertising for $3 a line
That's right, sell your goods or services in Parsec's classified section for $3 a line. Just call Donna Krejlgaard at (705) 523-1831 to place an advertisement

Conventions

September 10
Quadcon #6: Tailsman Hotel, Ottawa, Ont. Scheduled guest: professional model builder and artist Owen E. Oulton. Information: (613) 738-1012 or P.O. Box 5752 Merivale Depot, Nepean, Ont., K2C 3M1.

October 6-8
BanffCon '95: Banff Park Lodge, Banff, Alta. Scheduled guest: Discworld's Terry Pratchett. $40 before Sept. 30 or $50 at door. Information: (403) 283-7367, banffcon95@copenhagen.cuug.ab.ca **or** P.O. Box 20001, Bow Valley Postal Outlet, Calgary, Alta., T2P 4H3

October 20-22
Contradiction Fifteen: Days Inn Fallsview, Niagara Falls, N.Y. Scheduled guests: Karen Joy Fowler, Rick Hautala and Hal Clement. $21 until Sept. 25 or $25 at door. Information: P.O. Box 100, Bridge Station, Niagara Falls, N.Y., 14305.

October 27-29
Concinnity '95: Comfort Inn, Kanata, Ont. Scheduled guest: Larry Stewart. $20 until Sept. 30 or $25 at door. Information: 36076-72 Robertson Road, Nepean, Ont., K2H 5Y8; (613) 831-7129; ak221@Freenet.Carleton.CA.

Primedia: Ramada Hotel 400/401, Toronto, Ont. Scheduled guest: Spider and Jeanne Robinson, Nigel Bennett. $25 until Sept. 30 or $35 at the door. Information: 114-22 Tinder Crescent, Toronto, Ont., M4A 1L6; (905) 820-3844.

Jan. 20-21
Pandemonium XIII: Ryerson Hub Cafeteria, Toronto, Ont. Information: Polar Bear Games, 118 Roncesvalle Ave. #34, Toronto, Ont.,M6R 2K8.

March 15-17
Odyssey Trek '96: Skyline Brock Hotel, Niagara Falls. Scheduled guest: Ethan Phillips, Deborah Duchene. One-day pass $20 & three-day pass $38 until Feb. 15 or $22/$42 at door. Information: 10 Highgate Dr., Unit #13, Stoney Creek, Ont., L8J 3P7; (905) 573-2187 or BHAGEY@HOOK UP.NET.

April 26-28
Fleet Academy North: Holiday Inn Yorkdale, Toronto, Ont. Scheduled guest: D.C. Fontana, Bjo Trimble. $35. Information: SASE to FAN c/o Georgina Miles, 26 Doddington Dr., Etobicoke, Ont., M8Y 1S4, (416) 588-3817, bru@io.org or http://www.io.org/~bru/.

May 17-20
CanCon '96: Tailsman Hotel, Ottawa, Ont. Scheduled guest: Robert Charles Wilson, Charles de Lint, Robert Sawyer. $20 in advance, $30 at door. Information: P.O. Box 5752, Merivale Depot, Nepean, Ont. K2C 3M1, (613) 738-1012, cancon@achilles.net, or http://www.achilles.net/~cancon/cancon.html.

June 7-9
Ad*Adstra 16: Yorkdale Holiday Inn, Toronto, Ont. Scheduled guest: David Hartwell. $25 pre-registration or $35 at door. Information: P.O. Box 7276, Station A, Toronto, Ont., M5W 1X9.

July 19-21
Con-Version XIII: Glenmore Inn, Calgary, Alta. Scheduled guest: Mel Gilden.

Convention Listings

Fan clubs and non-profit groups can have their conventions included in our listings FREE OF CHARGE.
Send us the details at least six months in advance and we'd be happy to include them in an upcoming issues of Parsec. Send them to Convention listings — Parsec, Unit G Suite 108, 1942 Regent St., Sudbury, Ont. P3E 3Z9 or fax: (705) 523-1831

BRAIN TEASER

1) Which classic Star Trek episode features the first appearance of the Romulans?
   (a) Day of the Dove
   (b) Amok Time
   (c) Balance of Terror

2) What is Sulu's hobby?

3) Which captain is in search of eternal youth in Omega Glory?

4) Which gladiator was Bones and Spock forced to fight in Bread and Circuses?

5) What is threatening a planet in The Paradise Syndrome?

6) What does the entrance to Vaal look like?

7) How many bands does Kirk wear on his arm?

8) In STNG, why do Klingons howl during their death ritual?
   a) To cast off evil thoughts before dying.
   b) To warn the dead that a Klingon warrior is coming.
   c) They're just upset.

9) In which episode does Guinan first appear?
   a) The Child
   b) Evolution
   c) The Neutral Zone

10) Why couldn't Beverly Crusher save Tasha Yar's life?

11) What is a Galvin?

12) Who is the Enterprise's barber?

13) What is the registration number of the Yamato?

14) How many times has Dr. Pulaski been married?

15) Which DS-9 character first appears in Firstborn?

16) What is Captain Picard's favorite drink?

17) Is Picard left or right-handed?

18) How many episodes of STNG does Q appear in?

19) In which episode does Data meet his mother?

20) In DS-9, who teaches Nog to read?
   a) Jake Sisko
   b) Benjamin Sisko
   c) Mile O'Brien

21) At what age does Kira begin fighting the Cardassians?
   a) Nine
   b) Twelve
   c) Fourteen

22) Who is Qwark's cousin?

23) What is the name of the walrus-like alien who hangs out in Qwark's bar?

24) What do Nog and Jake trade for yamok sauce for in Progress?

25) How many times has Dax been a mother?

ANSWERS:

(24) self-sealing stem bolts; (25) three

RATING:

1 - 5: Go see Boothby, you need some advice.
6 - 10: You should consider repeating a year at the Academy.
11 - 15: Red-shirted ensign (and you know how long they last!)
16 - 18: Captain (of an ore carrier)
19 - 22: Captain (of a pretty-good sized starship).
23 - 24: You've achieved Picard-like status in Starfleet.
25: Consider yourself the head of Starfleet Operations.

Sure, even a lowly Cardassian knows Qwark and his brother, but do you know the name of his cousin? See question #22.

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PARSEC

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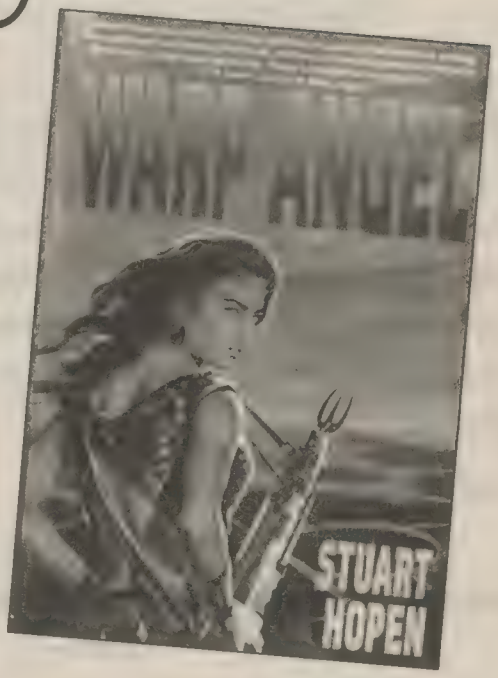

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In addition, one person will also receive a mini-fantasy library — Warp Angel and Earthborn Volume Five — courtesy of Tor books.

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Just fill out the form below and return it to us by September 1 to be eligible for the draw. The winners will be contacted by us and will be listed in Parsec's October/November issue.

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WELL . . . WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Place of residence:
City: _____ **Province:** _____ **Postal code:** _____

Age: 16-18 18-24 25-32 33-42 43+

Occupation: Student technical professional other: _____

Education: last grade/year completed:

High School college university graduate post-graduate

Annual household income:

under $20,000 $20,100 - $30,000 $30,100-$40,000 $40,000+

Hobbies:

Electronics	❑	Stamps collecting	❑
Video tapes	❑	Coin collecting	❑
Laser disks	❑	Records/tapes/CDs	❑
Video games	❑	Computers	❑
Comic books	❑	Reading	❑
Genre:	❑	Gaming	❑
Modelling	❑		

How much do you spend on your hobby:

by month: _____ by year: _____

How do you find out about new products pertaining to your hobby?

newspapers magazines television in-store promotions a friend's advice

Do you go to movies?

type of movies: _____ how frequently: _____

If you were the editor of Parsec, which features would you keep? _____

Which would you eliminate? _____

What would you add? _____

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest) how would you rate the following:

Cover feature story:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Star Trek interview:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Author interview:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Software review:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Book review:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Pondering:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Technology feature:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Tark:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
For a Change:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

PARSEC

UNKNOWN FORCES

YOU MAY THINK YOU KNOW WHAT'S OUT THERE.
BUT YOU'RE WRONG.
MY NAME IS AARON DEL MAR, AND I'VE JUST KILLED MY BROTHER. IT WAS EASY.
THERE'S A SECRET NETWORK OF TELEPATHS OUT THERE. AND THEY HAVE AN AGENDA.
SO DO I.
THEY'VE FLED SOUTH, TO THE GULF COAST. BUT THAT'S AS FAR AS THEY'LL GET. I MAY HAVE BEEN THE ONE WHO ENDED MY BROTHER'S LIFE, BUT THEY KILLED HIM LONG AGO.
AND I OWE THEM FOR THAT.
CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

STORY: KENNEDY GORDON
PICTURES: JOHN TKACHUK

OCTOBER ISSUE

PARSEC

Roxanne Biggs-Dawson

Voyager's chief engineer

Nosferatu

A look at movie's first vampire

Core Digital

Toronto's special effects factory behind Tek War.

PRESENTING

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The Umbra™

The blood of the fomori drips from Mari Cabra's claws. Mewling packs of Wyrm creatures retreat before her and vanish in fear into the Umbra. She smiles, and steps sideways into her reflection: they will not escape her. Werewolves have entered into a new field of combat. Greater danger — and greater triumphs — await in the Velvet Shadow, the spiritual reflection of our world — the realm known as the Umbra.

The Umbra is the first expansion for RAGE, the balls out best-selling game of werewolf combat. With over 90 new cards, the Umbra introduces to RAGE fans an entirely new level of play, including a brand-new Quest card series, new characters such as the legendary Wahya Ohni, and a variety of novel foes, such as umbral spirits and the dreaded reality-warping Nexus Crawler.

RAGE

The Werewolf: The Apocalypse Collectible Trading Card Game

WHITE WOLF GAME STUDIO

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